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FALLING LEAVES

BY EMMY E. REXFORD.

The autumn leaves are falling softly, slowly,
Upon the grassy graves where dear ones lie,
On the brown hill, or in the valley lowly,
And sadly, mournfully the winds go by.
So falls the autumn of the year about us,
And life's sad autumn cometh to the heart;
And many a tender thought is falling sadly
On the dead hopes that filled so bright a part.
Oh, sweet, dead hopes! We wept to see you dying,
For oh, we loved you! But, like summer flowers,
You perished, when the frost-wind, wailing, sighing,
Blow through the languor of the autumn hours!
It is most sweet to think that, when the winter
Has come and gone, sweet spring shall have control,
And bud and blossom know a resurrection.
Like that, which, after death, awaits the soul.
Oh, can it be that, in the Spring Eternal,
That, after death, shall come to you and me,
These poor dead hopes shall spring, in beauty vernal,
And grow to glad us in eternity?
I do not know, but oh! the thought has thrilled me
With yearning for the home, born in the world's wild
strife,
And I shall pray that dreams most sweetly cherished
May find fruition in the after life!

Coral and Ruby:

THE RETRIBUTION OF A LIFE-TIME.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTEE," "STRANGELY WED,"
"GEOFF'S DEBIT," "MADAME DURAND'S PROTE-
GES," "THE FAIRY WIDOW," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DEATH AT THE BRIDAL.

THERE was a golden mist in the air. A soft haze which mellowed the dazzling splendor of a glowing midsummer day.

The place was in Virginia. Mountains loomed up at the back of it, their rugged outlines softened by blue distance. Broad tobacco fields stretched on either side, and a little village, straggling in form, of a couple of irregular streets, would be known at a glance as the negro-quarters. Yet it had not the appearance of a prosperous place. Houses were down half of the wide fields had gone to waste, while the other half lacked the luxuriance in growth of the broad-leaved plant which denotes careful culture.

Foliage tangled in its native wildness about the low, plain brown house—this Virginia mansion. Creeping vines ran riot where they would—a profusion of trumpet-vines among them, whose scarlet, bell-shaped blossoms lent a brightness to all which made the wilderness one of delight. There was a smooth, close-shaven turf, the one feature about the grounds which had evidently received care. That this was some festive occasion one might judge. There were groups of people upon the lawn and in the wide, bare porches which opened on every side of the low, rambling house. All old Virginia people, owning as much pride of aristocracy as the Old World ever boasted.

One figure was stationed beyond the limit where these guests wandered—a young man, carefully dressed, pale and jaded, glooming fiercely at the mansion half concealed by the tangled, rampant growth. His face changed, a sudden light succeeded by an ugly scowl, chased across it, when a girl dressed all in white leaned out for a moment from one of the upper casements.

It was Helene Pomroy—Helene Pomroy in her wedding robes, complete all but the bridal veil which floated like a snowy mist from its orange wreath over a no less snowy couch within the room—Helene Pomroy, who would this day bring back to the proud but impoverished house the glory of wealth which had departed from it—bring it back by a marriage with one of Richmond's wealthiest men. With a young man, too, and a handsome one—all the county agreed in pronouncing Helene's an enviable lot.

A clock in the chamber was striking the half-hour. It was half-past four of the afternoon. At five she would go down to meet her bridegroom—would utter her vows to love and be true to him in deed and thought above all others through life.

The slender white hands locked together in a strained clasp as she leaned against the open casement, and a lone ring—a great solitary diamond—caught a sunray and flashed it up against her sight like a cruel knife-blade. She shrank a little, but her set features did not change; a slight breeze stirred the leaves, swaying the branches which almost interlaced before her window, and she had a momentary glimpse of the man who stood far back, leaning against a tree-trunk, gazing fixedly up at her.

"Helene, will you put on your veil, now? The girls are waiting, and Mr. Stuyvesant is in sight from the observatory, some one said."

"Not just yet, aunt Linda. There's a half-hour yet, a whole half-hour's grace." She gave utterance to a little hard laugh, there. "Keep the girls out, please, that's a dear auntie, I am going out for just a breath of fresh air; it is stifling here, and no one need know."

"Helene, is it best?"

The troubled look gathered like a cloud over her aunt's face showed that she too had seen that form shadowed against the deeper shadow of the overhanging tree.

"Aunt Linda, they give a sentenced prisoner a short respite for prayer before he is led out for execution, do they not?—a little time to implore pardon of his God. Why shouldn't as much mercy be shown to me, though mine is a sacrifice and not a punishment? I only ask one little moment before the god of my adoration."

"Helene!"—shocked at her impetuosity.

"For the very last time, auntie. After the next half-hour I shall strive to turn my soul and heart, as well as my actions, in loyalty to



He started, and a livid line encircled his mouth at that painfully-passionate parting kiss.

my bonds. I feel as though I should die if I do not go now. Keep every one out, and I will be back by the time."

Unseen she gained the grounds below, and sped over the walks toward that lone form. He saw her coming, but scarcely stirred, except to follow the advancing figure with his gloomy gaze. Then she was before him, quiet, self-contained, with downfallen lids hiding the smoldering fire in her big dark eyes.

"Clive!"

"Have you come to give me a last glimpse of the Paradise from which I am to be barred out forever? I was contenting myself with a glance at the gates, not hoping to view the angel within."

"How bitterly you speak! How cold you are! Oh, Clive, Clive! how cruel that we should part so!"

His quietude, his restraint—he had not offered to touch even her hand—broke down the barrier of her reserve.

"Cruel?—yes, it is cruel that we should part at all, but it was not I who willed the separation. Do you want me to offer you such a mockery as a wish for your happiness? Do you know that my sweetest consolation just now lies in the belief that your draught will be bitter to the dregs? I think I could strike you dead where you stand before I would let you leave me for another man's arms and—happiness. But while I know that you will suffer in the depths of that proud spirit of yours for every caress you receive from him—suffer as I have suffered through your faithlessness—I couldn't ask a more complete revenge."

"I had no choice, Clive! Heaven pity us both!"

She wrung her hands together, with her woeful dark eyes set like stars in her face, which was still and white as if cut from cameo.

"Oh, Clive, that I should have to beg for one kind word from you—only one, as a reminder of the happy dream which has passed away forever. I had no choice, I say. What woman has in these days? They rear us like lilies of the field that have no business on earth except to be fair and helpless, and then, when the proper time comes, we are put off on the highest bidder our frail beauty calls into the mart. It's the way of the world—of my world, and I am only a unit of the whole that goes to sway it so."

"There have been women who have forsaken their world for the sake of their loves," he said.

"Not women like me, Clive. There is a ruling element strong in all, and I have the ambition which delights in the purple and fine linen of the world's goods. I am utterly incapacitated for a life of toil and grinding poverty; I couldn't live and struggle with such. I am nothing better than a beggar, but I have always lived luxuriously and had servants to wait upon me. At the best I never could have given up my life as it was to share the ills of the world even with you, but I would—oh! how gladly—have waited years—all time for you, but for poor papa."

"You had the goodness to tell me before, Helene. Heart-disease—any great disappointment or excitement apt to prove fatal. I wish to heaven it had taken him off before he snared you in this net."

"Clive, don't. Papa means for the best."

"He means for the best—oh, yes! He will clear off the mortgages which hamper his plantation, he will renew the exchequer empty for so many years, he will drive his fast span and hold up his head free from his load of debtors' incumbrances, and you will be the price of it all. He is old and you are young—why shouldn't he die to spare you such heartbreak?"

"Hearts don't break—if they only did! And it wouldn't spare me; I would be driven to the same choice all the same. Hark! I must go."

A band stationed away on one of the smaller porches was discussing sweet music. It was the signal for the guests, who were fast deserting the lawn for the low, wide rooms within.

"It seems like my funeral dirge," she said, with a shiver. "Farewell, Clive—farewell to the happy old life forever!"

He caught her hands, crushing them in his fierce grasp, his eyes reading her pallid, yet resolute face.

"Must it go on then, Helene? Will nothing move you or warn you at the last moment? Will nothing tempt you—my love, my life?"

"Let me go, Clive! You are hurting me—you frighten me with that look in your eyes."

"Will you go?"

"I must."

He slackened his hold but did not release her.

"I don't wish harm to befall you, Helene—I couldn't do that and love you. You will be miserable, I feel that, and it matters little now what comes of me. I am not even angry with you; I would spare you if I could, and I warn you. The conviction has been growing upon me since we two stood here together that I am to work you sorrow some time in the far future. If your lot should be cast with mine—What is it, Helene?"

"I heard a step. Quick, let me go."

He drew a short breath, leaned forward and pressed his passion-hot mouth upon hers. Then she tore away from him, the sheen of her snowy satin robes flashing back through the greenery, a blood-red flame beating into her pallid cheeks, her lips burning like fire. He watched her disappear, then turned away, with set lips, and

eyes which never glanced aside from the straight blank space before him. So both were unconscious that a witness had appeared upon that parting scene.

A man, taller by a head than this lover of Helene's, with brown soft hair, short and straight, and a chestnut beard slightly waving and carefully trimmed. Such a man as a glance would decide to be strong and unyielding—a few lines in the forehead and a cynical expression about the mouth, which never go with the fresh, chivalrous ardor of early manhood. He was not more than thirty, he might have been less, but faces wearing the impassive mask common to his age sure to cover a wild if not a wicked record gone before.

The mask dropped; he started, and a livid line encircled his mouth at that painfully-passionate parting kiss. He stood without moving, however, and when the two had gone, put up his unsteady hand for a moment, shading his eyes from the golden sunlight, the flickering leafy shadows, the scarlet flame of the flaming trumpet blooms.

It was scarcely calculated to be a pleasant sight to the man who would be wedded to Helene Pomroy within the hour, for this was Boyd Stuyvesant, the chosen husband-elect. No word passed his lips, not a sound, not a sigh, but there was a great thrice of inward anguish, a spasm of remorse and an apprehensive thrill, and this is the silent cry his soul uttered in the moment he stood there motionless:

"Oh, my God! Is this retribution come upon me? Is it a just return that the woman I love shall come to me with the kiss of another man, whom she loves, fresh upon her lips?"

That was the blind cry of his soul, and he checked it there. The same persistency of strength which had carried him straight forward through good and through evil before this, led him straight on through this also. He would not even contemplate the prompting of self-sacrifice which for one instant had fluttered in a dimly conscious way. Give her up?—help Clive Tracy to a place where he might wear the love he craved? Never, never!

So the impassive mask went on again, and he had put away the last chance which might have spared him a lifetime of such bitter, remorseful suffering, as made a bagatelle of the shadowy depths which lay behind in his reckless, wild, and dissipated youth.

"Helene! Where is Helene? Are you coming, child?"

It was her father's voice at the door, and Helene moved toward him from the group of bridesmaids clustered about her. The bridal veil was like a misty cloud about her, that vivid flame burning in cheeks and lips. He beamed his approval down upon her.

"That's right, my dear. Wear roses on your

wedding-day, and such a wedding-day! Heaven bless you, daughter!"

A passing film dimmed the hard brightness of her eyes.

"Is it making you happy, papa?"

"Light-hearted as a boy again. I have not been so free of all care since the day you were born, my daughter."

He turned her face toward him and dropped a light kiss upon her brow as she slipped her hand within his arm. He was a modest Southern gentleman, this impoverished Virginia planter—one on whom misfortune sat easy until it began to grind, and then he gave way before it with scarcely a resistance; one who entertained with lavish hospitality, whose doors were always open, his bread ready to be broken with the veriest stranger passing his way. Chivalrous in his sentiments, possessing that pride of caste characterizing his class, full of inconsistencies, loved with a wonderful tenderness by his only child, and loving her tenderly, proudly, albeit unwisely—such was St. John Pomroy.

The molten golden mist of sunshine rained over the smiling earth. The pearly canopy above reflected nothing but the glory of the yellow globe, dropping close to the horizon—not a cloud to break the expansive arch. The guests whispered that such a perfect day was a good augury; there were some envious sighs and a buzz of admiring comment; then utter silence in the assembly as the two clasped hands before the hoary-headed minister who had officiated at the wedding of the bride's parents and her own christening.

The ceremony was solemn, elaborate and tedious. By the time it was over and the congratulations duly tendered, red sunset was glowing without and a shadowy gloom gathered within.

Then the dining-rooms were thrown open, ablaze with myriad clusters of waxlights. Great bare rooms they were, with slippery, polished oaken floors, and wainscoting black with age. But the long tables were weighted down with good cheer, and not the least notable feature were sundry long-necked, green-sealed bottles brought forth to grace the occasion from the depths of the vault, where they had been stored Heaven only knows how many scores and scores of years ago, by a dead and gone Pomroy, whose semblance, along with some others, stared down at them from the paneled wall. All good fortune to the newly-wedded pair was quaffed in a round draught of the rare golden vintage. The crystal of the bride's goblet clinked against that of her new-made husband, touched that of her father, and was raised to her lips, then it went down with a crash, untasted.

But first another glass had gone crashing to the solid oaken floor. St. John Pomroy, in the act of draining off his golden wine, started, uttered one groan, caught blindly at the air, and fell forward on his face as if he had been shot.

Joyful excitement had done for him what disappointment might have done. He was dead of heart-disease.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

ST. JOHN POMROY lay with crossed hands and features locked in a marble-like repose in his ebony casket.

Beside it sat his daughter—the bride, so sorrowfully afflicted in the first hour of her wedded life. But there with a face only one shade less rigid and ghastly than the dead one in the coffin. Livid shadows were under her eyes, but the eyes themselves were like smoldering coals, quite tearless. They burned with a fierce heat which seemed to scorch the lids that had hardly closed in the three days since he was dead.

The house was full of sitting, ghastly-silent, black-clad forms. Occasionally one would come and attempt to draw her gently away, but she kept her place like a statue of Grief, with the horror and woe of that first moment frozen in her unchanging expression. Her very heart seemed to have died with him; her nerves had been robbed of the one reward which had cast a halo about it. He never would enjoy the fruit of it; the very means by which she had hoped to prolong his life and gild it happily, had snapped the frail thread. Could he rest peacefully in his grave, she wondered, knowing the hopelessly dreary burden she had taken up for his sake? Would he know it in the spirit life, or were all earthly sorrows and troubles blotted out?

It was unnatural, this stony, undemonstrative grief. People began to remark it in suppressed, wondering tones. "He was her father to be sure; so fond of him as she had been it was natural she should sorrow deeply now; but this stolid despair, this utter retreating into herself—they could not make it out at all. Why did she not lean upon and share her sorrow with the husband who was to be her rock of strength after this? Why did she not accept and be thankful for the watchful tenderness which would take the place of the father's love?"

She felt her husband's presence by her side, but it did not move her. He was very gentle and thoughtful but did not intrude upon her further than by his quiet presence. That scene in the grounds so shortly before he had wedded her had given him a warning which he heeded.

Then in the brilliancy of the midsummer afternoon, St. John Pomroy was carried out over the threshold, up a slope where tangling branches matted themselves across the way, to the old family burying-ground, where he was laid away with the past generations of his kin.

The awesome silence which had brooded over the place lifted a little. The dread presence of death out of the house, sable servants busied themselves in brightening the dark old rooms, putting away the somber badges which had decked walls and doorways.

A waxen taper here and there lent an uncertain light in the halls and on the stairway when Boyd Stuyvesant went into the room where his bride was sitting quite alone. It was the bridal chamber, and they were together there for the first time. A canopied bed, with draperies sheer as driven snow, occupied one corner; a

tall vase crowded with snowy blossoms that were wilted and drooping, now gave out a sickly sweet odor. A luminous dusk was gathering without, a shaded lamp made mellow light within.

She was lying back wearily in a great dark chair. Her face had not changed, fixed, pallid, emotionless as stone, but her hollow dusky eyes gave back his glance as he stood before her.

"Helene," he said, "Helene, my wife. You will do yourself harm by indulging such bitter grief. You must rouse yourself, you must take some rest. If I could but lighten the burden for you."

There was passionate entreaty underlying the quiet tone he compelled himself to use, but hers was only monotonous and weary when she answered.

"You have been kind and very considerate. Can I tax your forbearance a little longer? I should like to be alone till the clock strikes; I have been used to sitting with papa at this time."

He left her without a word. For a little while she sat with listless hands folded, and her still face outlined against the quaint carving of the dark old chair. Then the slender hands went up to brush across her eyes as if sweeping away some mist which obscured the sight.

"And this at the very beginning of life," she said to herself. "I have lost the two I loved best on earth; I am bound to a man who will be my master but whom I shall never love, and it seems that the very blackness of despair is only brooding—yet to fall upon me. This quiet which they call unreasoning grief is the absence of all feeling unless an undefined pity of myself in the time to come. I wish I could feel grief, anguish, any thing but this dreary calm."

She rose up to trail her sable dress back and forth across the stained and polished floor, then paused to draw back the curtains from the open casement and looked out into the dusk of the summer night. A waft of warm breeze swept over her face, a few stars were blinking already in the pale sky, a shrill-voiced insect chirruped monotonously somewhere near, and a night-bird raised its first melancholy cry afar off. Scarcely noting them, these things all stamped themselves upon her memory to recur again months hence when the humiliation and the anguish fell of which she had this night a warning presence.

Towering above the foliage which intervened, a darker shadow against the dusk, was the tree under which she had parted from Clive Tracy. That seemed ages ago, and it was but three days' time; were the coming years doomed to tread themselves so interminably? Seeing it recalled something, and she turned to a little closed cabinet standing in a space between two windows.

One link yet to be severed between her and the happy life. A few letters and a curl of blonde hair which she took from an inner drawer, the souvenirs that team of love ruthlessly sacrificed. She lighted a taper and held them one by one in the blaze until only a little heap of gray ashes remained, and the last link was severed. The clock struck and she awaited the coming of her husband. Waited so long, too, that even her stony indifference was stirred with wonder that he did not come.

Leaving her, he had gone out to pace the lawn in front of the mansion. A tall clock in the hall would ring out its resonant clang presently, and recall him to her side; he had no mind to leave her now more than the time she had asked. If tenderness and unwearied devotion ever prevailed over a woman's heart, he determined that his should in winning her love. There was a little girl mingled with the bright pleasure of the anticipation. His head bowed upon his breast, his gloomy, stormy face indistinct in the night shadows, betrayed that.

He started as a hand fell upon his arm, and turned to face a woman, unusually tall, darkly comely, there beside him.

"Boyd, I have been watching for you."

He shook off her hand and stood as if turned to stone.

"How rejoiced you are to see me, to be sure! Who could have foreseen such a meeting when we parted, something near two years ago?"

"I hoped we might never meet again in the wide world."

"Kind, as of old, my dear Boyd. You would spare me the pangs of remembrance, the envious thrills over what *should* have been when I see the afflicted bride. I was a little too late to be here for the wedding, as was my first intention."

Without answering, he gripped her arm and hurried her away from the immediate vicinity of the mansion.

"Now, in Heaven's name, why are you here?" he demanded, dropping her arm and stepping back a pace, unmistakable anger in his voice, threatening, too, it would seem.

"To offer congratulations, since you have come into possession of the fair being—the object of your latest 'grand passion,' perhaps. It would have made a difference had I arrived three days ago."

"Possibly—but it would have been the worse for you."

She went on without observing the interruption.

"Then I would have seen the happy bride-elect and related a little episode occurring not more than two years ago in a sequestered region up among the Alleghany mountains. A sweet summer idyll well fitted for such dainty ears."

"I haven't a doubt of your kind intentions, Margray," he broke in, ironically. "Thank fortune, you are too late to carry them into effect. Why are you here, I ask again? I left you provided for, but if it is money you want you shall have it freely."

The woman's voice was richly musical, and she had it perfectly under control. Her face, as seen in the clear starlight, was regular and bold of feature, dark almost to swarthy—a striking face even as seen by that indistinct light. Stuyvesant was impressed by it as she regarded him for the moment speechlessly.

least expect it at your weakest points. Fear of me shall make your existence what you would have made mine had I been weak as you thought me. It is to tell you this I am here to-night."

"Fear?" he said, throwing back his tall head. "I fear you? Do your worst, and you can but expose your own weakness. I have never known fear in all my life, and it is not probable that a woman shall teach it to me now. Margray," his voice softened, "I am not the man I was in times past. Heaven knows, if bitter repentance can blot out my reckless acts, they will never appear against me. I have turned my back on all that and have begun my life anew. You are bitter against me now, but you must see what idly wasted breaths are those threats of vengeance against me. It would be useless to ask you to forget—I shall make such amends as it is in my power to make, and it will be better for both if we never meet again."

"I have sinned, and I am willing to be forgiven—what a concession for you to make! What a softening influence love has to melt your despotic pride so far! You are willing to be at harmony with *even me*! You are quite content to let me sink my bitter remembrances if only I leave you in peace! Loving once, I have ceased to love; hating once, I shall hate on forever—you and yours. You shall learn fear yet, and at the hands of a woman. Defy me now while you may; it will not be for long. When I should go in there now and denounce you to your waiting bride?"

"I should tell her the simple truth, and throw myself upon her mercy."

"I might do it if she cared for you—but that would be too poor revenge. It would scarcely make her suffer, the simple knowledge of your unworthiness; and my revenge, like my nature, has hidden depths which you will not probe for a time."

"Have you done, Margray? Will you go before some of the servants come prowling about to discover you here or shall I send a body guard to escort you outside the gates? For your own sake as well as mine, I trust you will make no repetition of this night's seeking."

"From this time I shall seek you only to enjoy my power. You were at my feet once pleading for my favor; you shall be there again sooner than you think—but it will be to beg for mercy. While we both live you shall never know mercy from me."

The tall form moved silently away, and in a moment was swallowed up in the deep shadow of neighboring foliage. Boyd Stuyvesant stood still for a little space, breathing hard, his face sternly set under the light of the stars.

"The way of the transgressor is hard," he muttered. "But we never knew it until we turn from our transgressions. I would give quite ten years of my life—of my best and happiest years—if that last crowning piece of reckless folly had never been committed. Heaven forgive me for it! I shall face the result and face it down, whatever it may be."

There was little good or evil that Boyd Stuyvesant was not capable of feeling, of doing it successfully, too, but an undelivered foreboding was in his mind as he went back to his waiting bride.

It afterward seemed that he had little foundation for his uneasiness. Weeks and months slipped by and he was left unmolested. He traveled with his wife for a time, then came back and settled in the grand house he had fitted to receive her. He was even winning upon Helene, and a great joy came to blot out some remorseful remembrances through infinite contentment in his present lot.

A year from that midsummer wedding-day a little morsel of humanity was born into the world, a mite which would knit a firmer bond between husband and wife than had existed yet. The young mother gazing into the violet eyes of the babe, at last was reconciled to her lot.

"What do you read in them, Helene?" her husband asked. "A message from me?"

"They are teaching me a lesson—they show me the way through duty to love."

Stuyvesant was thinking of the scene, of the fair young mother with her pretty babe upon her lap, smiling wistfully and trustfully up at him for almost the first time in this year of their wedded life, as he sat in his study later that day. The lines in his forehead were less distinct and his mouth had lost its old cynical curve; the buoyancy and freshness of youth had come back in a measure, and he was smiling silently over some happy fancy.

"Surely Paradise was not more complete," he said to himself.

"And the trail of the serpent was over it all!" Unwittingly he had spoken his thought. He looked up with a start. The door had swung back noiselessly, and an unannounced visitor stood there.

"Margray—you?"

"I, Boyd. What a pity the serpent ever did make its appearance at all, but since it was so, our modern Paradise must not lack the enemy's presence. Yours will be no exception, I'm afraid."

She advanced a step and the door swung closed. Boyd Stuyvesant rose slowly up, grave and determined.

"I asked you once not to approach me again. There is the door—go! If you have any business with me I will see you elsewhere, but you shall not remain under this roof."

"Yet, if I cared to assert it, I have a better right under this roof than certain other ones it shelters. You look incredulous, but you shall be convinced. Ring if you care to; I can make my revelation before the household if you prefer it."

His hand stretched toward the bell-rope fell, and he turned upon her impatiently.

"Say what you have to say and begone quickly, then."

"You are not hospitable, scarcely civil. Does joy influence you so? We will try the effect of a contrary emotion soon."

"Only to vindicate myself and to taste the sweets of this first step toward my revenge. It is nearly three years now since your desertion of me, and since that time I have had one firm, fixed purpose. If we both could live while the world lasts I never would cease to pursue you. It is time now that the story be told of your love among the mountains, and your secret marriage there, three years ago or more. Will you call down the interesting and interested convalescent to hear the tale, or shall we ascend and repeat it by the side of cradled innocence? That ferocious look is quite thrown away upon me; I have all the assurance the law allows, in withholding it; and that reckless piece of folly, my dear Boyd, is about to recoil on your own devoted head. If I was innocent as a dove in those days, I also combined the wisdom of the serpent. That secret marriage which you have considered a false one, which you meant as a blind to overcome a conscientious girl's scruples, was a legal one. I have the doubtful honor of being your wife, Mr. Stuyvesant."

"It is false!" he uttered, hoarsely.

"It is true," he said, and bowed before her.

"My God, Helene!"

She glided forward from the doorway, white as the wrapper she wore. No word was needed to announce that she had heard the other's assertion.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER SEVENTEEN YEARS.

A STONE villa in the midst of pleasant, well-kept grounds skirting the river, was the suburban home of the Stuyvesants.

Autumn had dashed touches of vivid coloring here and there amid the foliage. Drifting leaves strewed the turf with a sparse tracery—a darkly emerald carpet with fantastic pattern of wood-brown, scarlet, and orange. An early frost had left the summer viney drooping, and sere-looking; and beds of fall flowers nodded their vivid tints from stalks where leaves languished, and were already falling away—like a gala-garb flung over the blight of desolation sapping out life at the roots.

It was a fair type of the life the Stuyvesants had led—husband and wife—for this seventeen years past. Brilliant, gay, luxurious, with such bitterness of desolation under all, as the world in which they moved never suspected. And yet the world knew much of their affairs, whispered the disapprobation it dared not speak openly, and made dark allusions to the mystery it did not understand.

It was no secret that the marriage, which to the world's view had promised so fairly eighteen years before, had resulted most unhappily. That death at the bridal, which some of the superstitious had shuddered at, seemed to have been followed by all the evil influences they had apprehended and dreaded.

For the first year a shadow, which might have been the shadow of grief only had hovered over the wedded pair—a shadow, which friends fondly hoped was dissipated at the birth of little Coral. But within two months following that happy event, had come an outburst, of what precise nature nobody knew; but afterward husband and wife had lived beneath the same roof, courteous and civil to each other always, but holding no more communication than if they were the veriest strangers simply thrown together in casual meeting.

Boyd Stuyvesant devoted himself with unwearied zeal to his profession of the law, and rose high in it.

Helene became a leader in fashionable circles. A very model leader, heartless and soulless, people said; brilliant, extravagant, admired, envied, flattered and blamed, all at once.

But the two were seldom seen together. They were as utterly separated in their tastes and pursuits, as though no shadow of a bond drew them together.

A check had come to Mrs. Stuyvesant's dazzling, dissipated career, however. It was more than human strength could endure to follow forever the gay, restless course she had run. Her health gave way at last, and for a few later years, she remained in comparative retirement in this delightful suburban villa.

Why Mr. and Mrs. Stuyvesant made such a hollow mockery of the happiness which *should* have been theirs, was an enigma which seventeen years' guessing on the part of the world had failed to solve. Theirs had been a marriage of convenience on one side at least, but such marriages have been before, and will be again, with never such a decided and bitter result.

There were whispers of a former love affair on the part of Helene, of wild and reckless deeds in Boyd's youth; but, after the fashion of this Nineteenth Century of ours, all that should be buried without leaving a ghost.

Mr. Stuyvesant himself was walking up and down his library floor, with bowed head, and hands clasped upon his back. He had grown old in the seventeen years. He was gray and wrinkled before his time; he was nervous and abstracted habitually, and any sudden interruption was apt to bring a start, and hunted look across his eyes. He wore the appearance of a man always on his guard against some impending evil, yet shrinking from and dreading it.

Seventeen years to-day, since my bitter expiation began," he was thinking to himself. "How much longer will nature sustain the burden? The fear, forever haunting me, is the bitterest curse Heaven could have sent or hell devised for my punishment. God knows I am suffering a life atonement. If only that fiend in woman's shape would be satisfied with it! If only she would spare the child of my love! I could live an anguished life, die a tortured death, and be happy through all for that knowledge. For five years that woman has held aloof, has neither sent me word nor token, and the suspense I have borne has been worse and harder to endure than her taunting appearances. Will another year go by in the same way? I scarcely know whether I hope or dread it most."

He did not pause in his restless walk, but his glance shifted uneasily, watching the door, and the view he could obtain from the long windows.

In his nervously expectant waiting, time seemed to drag interminably, yet it was but a little time until what he watched and waited for came. Not quite in the way he had expected, but came nevertheless, adding its share to the burden he already bore, giving him a little respite from the fear which hung a horror-cloud over his life. It came in the shape of a letter.

A square plain envelope, addressed in a hand as masculine in its firm round outlining. A hand, the right of which brought that pallid circle about his lips, the mark of strong, though repressed agitation; then he tore it open, and glanced his eye over the one closely-written page. A sigh and a groan escaped together from his tortured breast. The strong man, broken down in the prime of his manhood, was quite unnerved.

"Oh, Heaven—that! Of all the ways she might find to torture me, I never apprehended that."

He took another turn or two across the library floor, then went into the passage with an unsteady tread, the letter crushed and crumpled in his hand. Up the stairway where the thick carpeting muffled his tread, the length of a wide hall above, and he tapped at his wife's door. It was opened from within by a thin, sallow, pale-haired and middle-aged woman, Mrs. Stuyvesant's companion.

It was a lady's boudoir to which he was admitted. A tiny exquisite apartment; the walls rose-tinted, and the hangings rose silk under lace, it was like the inner surface of a shell. Mrs. Stuyvesant reclined upon a couch, but rose to a sitting posture as he entered.

"It was a strangely invariable face she turned toward him. 'A little thinner than it has been seventeen years before, the dusky eyes seeming larger, with dark shadows beneath them, but otherwise the same. It would almost seem that set, still, deathly-pallid look which had settled upon her features then, had never softened or changed. He paused just within the door, as she glanced from him toward her companion."

"You may go for a little time, Miss Lang. You are quite at liberty for an hour, and wait within call after that. Will you be seated, Mr. Stuyvesant?"

It was a coldly formal address to come from a wife to her husband, and it gave him an additional pang. He had ruthlessly trampled every intervening consideration to gain possession of her, and this was a part of his cross—to bear her always, and yet as surely separated as if at the antipodes. He came forward a pace, but without seating himself.

"I have received a message, Helene."

"From—that woman?"

"Yes." A moment's silence fell, during which she waited without rousing from her indifferent, stony quietude. His voice was husky and tremulous despite his strong effort at self-command as he proceeded.

Helene, she commands me to bring her daughter here. And—Heaven pity me—I dare not refuse."

"No." The calm, monotonous utterance was unchanged.

"But, to have a spy in our very midst, to throw the girl into companionship with Coral, how can I? I would move heaven and earth if I dared defy her."

"You don't dare. I have expected this for years."

He looked at her, the muscles about his mouth twitching, his eyes full of hungry expectancy.

"Will you never forgive me the cruel fate I was the means of bringing upon you, Helene? God knows, I would have yielded up my life first, had I known the truth."

Her eyes met his, reflecting only cold surprise. She had raised the barrier between them, which must not be overstepped. She referred to the matter which had brought him to seek her as if he had not spoken.

"When does the young lady come?"

"She is at the old place among the mountains. I am to go for her immediately, and—she bids me take Coral along."

"The change of scene will do her no harm," returned Mrs. Stuyvesant, indifferently. "Take her, by all means."

"What does she mean by it?" he asked, with passionate earnestness. "I can understand why she should send me up into that fastness, knowing that the sight of the place will be an added bitterness, but why does she include Coral as well? Woman's intuition is said to be more subtle than man's reasoning; do you think she means to betray all to the child, Helene?"

"Would she be sending her daughter here in that case? No, she would lose too much of her power over you by doing so. She will never reveal the truth to Coral until she can strike you a deadly blow through telling it."

"Helene," his voice was thrillingly intense, "I am ready to brave the exposure, and vindicate myself, well as I may in the eyes of the world. It is the only way to break her rule over us. There is scarcely a doubt but any court would free me now, and then I could defy her worst efforts. Helene, if you would only stand by me—"

"I would die," she interrupted, in that cold, changeless monotone. "The exposure, the disgrace, the scandal would kill me. If I were not sure of it, if I should even live to feel anything again, we could be nothing more than the strangers we are now. I don't think I should quite hate you, but I should never wish to look upon your face again. It is as well this way. Is that the letter?"

"Yes, I have not destroyed it yet—I thought you might care to see it."

"Not if that is all."

"I have told you all." There was a little fire burning behind the polished steel bars of the grate, and he crossed over to drop the letter into the blaze.

"Are you going?" She glanced up as he turned toward the door. "Will you be kind enough to engage a town house and have it fitted up for the winter? Have it ready by the last of November if possible."

"I thought the quiet here suited you best, Helene."

"It has not suited me at all; I have been forced to content myself. I shall live again back in town, and it is quite time Coral was brought out. The change will scarcely be more onerous than I shall have two to chaperone."

"You are not strong enough—the excitement will be harmful to you."

"I am not resigned enough to quite rust out here. After this, while I do live, I shall at least taste the froth of the pleasures of life. That is all, I believe."

He went out in obedience to her gesture of dismissal. Back to the library he carried his heavy heart and dragging tread, and there watched the afternoon wane.

"Why, oh, why, the thunderous cloud upon that noble brow? Papa, you look absolutely forbidding."

He looked up, with a start.

Framed in the long, low window, her laughing, saucy face turned toward him, sunshine filtering over her bright hair, was his daughter Coral. A fair, happy, care-free girl, notwithstanding the cloud which had hovered over the house almost from the time of her birth; but then only the vague, undefined shadow of it had fallen upon her. Youth is not usually closely discriminating. The very apple of her father's eye, treated with indifferent fondness but always kindly by her mother, she had shaken off the oppressive influence, and been merry and joyous in her own way, a very sunbeam in the gloomy house.

"Don't you know that knit brows and frowning men should be peculiar to you in your professional capacity only? I thought men of business always had two faces, one especially sacred for home use. How is it, papa?"

"Coral!—I was thinking of sending for you. Come in, my dear, and close the window. The air is a trifle chilly, I think."

"Bracing, exhilarating." This glorious autumn sunshine is preferable to indoor storms brewing. You looked like some surly Bruin as I came up; will you promise not to eat me if I venture into your lair?"

"Enter, and we'll have a private rehearsal of Beauty and the Beast—with variations. That isn't apropos, perhaps. I am going to take a little trip up into the mountains, Coral; how would you like to bear me company?"

"The mountains!—oh, dearly. It's very nice here, of course, papa, but one *don't* like to be caged up behind even gilded bars forever. When and where and why are you going, you delicious old darling of a father. I wonder if you knew I was sighing for a break of this tiresome, humdrum monotony."

"He was very nearly sighing, and checked himself just in time. The shadow of his burden must not cloud this bright young life. She must not know how bitterly he regretted and mistrusted the necessity compelling him to take her with him."

"How many questions in a breath—easily answered though. When?—to-morrow. Where?—up in the wilds of the Alleghanies. Why?—to take possession of a ward thrown unexpectedly upon my care. How will you like to have a companion to vary the monotony here?"

"I shall not like it at all. A ward—I didn't know you had such an incubrance, papa. Somebody to keep watch of every thing I do, and flinch your time away from me, and be a sly cat purring over the poor little mouse—me. Thank you! I've enough of that in the estimable Miss Lang. Must you bring her here, really?"

"I really must, I'm afraid. We'll hope for something differing from the estimable Miss Lang, however. Are you able to bear additional news, or is one dose sufficient?"

"Oh, let me know the worst. I'll take the bitter all at once, if it's the same to you."

This coming season. Shall I give you a check for ribbons and turbulences?"

"Papa, oh!" She went whirling away about the room in a giddy dance of delight, and wound up by throwing both arms about his neck in a close hug, and rubbing her soft cheek against his bearded one.

"A check, of course, and a good round one too, with a dozen others to back it. You dear papa!"

"But I have to disclaim your gratitude, Coral. I did not originate either of the surprises which seem to delight you so."

"No? But you can be glad with me, which will answer all the same. I don't think you are an inventive genius, papa, but you can be a sympathetic one, I know."

With that she darted out, and he heard her singing up the stairway a moment after. And this was the bright young creature whose future could be made or marred by that relentless, unforgiving woman, whose power over him was supreme. He dropped his face into his hands with an audible groan.

The morrow saw the two upon their unpremeditated journey. It was late in the afternoon when they arrived at the village station where their railway course ended; too late, Mr. Stuyvesant said, to go further that day, but Coral put in a remonstrance.

"Why not, papa? Twenty miles further up the mountain, you say. But with two hours of daylight, allowing for dining here, and a full moon, we can surely make it before midnight, notwithstanding all my acquired knowledge of mountain roads. Do let us make the attempt at least, with a glance at the bare, rickety village inn and the group of idlers congregated on its not over-clean steps."

"Thunder-storm brewin'," remarked the landlord, with a nod toward a thin haze in the west. "Shouldn't like to take the mountings myself to-night, specially with a young lady in charge. There's a team and a boy to drive at hand if you want 'em, though."

Mr. Stuyvesant glanced at the mist-like cloud and hesitated.

"Papa, he wants to delude you into patronizing that miserable old shell of his. It wouldn't take a tornado to tumble it down about our ears. I'd rather trust to the rocks for shelter than to that barney piece of dilapidation."

Her urging prevailed. They went within to partake of a hurried, ill-cooked dinner, and afterward pursued their way up the mountain side.

It was a nondescript, antiquated sort of vehicle provided for them, a carriage with high seats and gullies of covering, drawn by two gaunt, rawboned beasts, slow but sure, and not lacking in spirit when once aroused, the landlord assured them.

"We'll have all the better opportunity for enjoying the beauties of the night," laughed Coral, in referring to mine host's solicitude some three hours later. "To think of predicting rain—look at that moon and those stars! Where has the imaginary cloud gone?"

"Look overhead, Coral. I almost wish we had taken his advice."

"Ah, it is there. Never mind, papa; every cloud doesn't break, and you'll be only a wet cloak worse off if this one should. I will quite escape with the rough blanket they've given me."

They were not to escape quite so easily, however. The cloud spread and darkened, then dropped all in a moment like a black pall over the luminous belt which had circled the horizon. Low, distant mutterings gathered force. The wind swept up through the fringe of trees skirting the winding mountain road.

"Can the horses keep the way, my lad?" asked Mr. Stuyvesant, anxiously. "Is there no shelter anywhere at all?"

"None but to the back of us," the boy answered. "The beasts be all right, though. They'd know every inch of the way through pitch."

However proof they may have been against the confusions of pitch, they were not equal to electric light. A blinding flash followed by a deafening peal as the heavens opened, and a dense sheet of rain came down startled them. They balked together, plunged, then started in a dead run up the precipitous, tortuous way. The boy was flung from his perch in front by their first sudden movement. Mr. Stuyvesant caught and secured the reins, but having gained a headway it was impossible to check the frightened creatures.

They tore on up the shelving course, gaining new terror through every lightning flash. Coral had slipped down to the floor of the carriage, which swayed frightfully, and was clinging fast with both hands to the side.

"Courage, Coral. Hold fast, don't leap. Oh, Heaven! is there no stopping these maddened brutes?"

Straight on, plunging quite out of the wagon track, crushing through underbrush, then the cause of their fright—a brilliant flash—revealed a yawning chasm not twenty feet ahead. Upon its very verge a wheel locked upon a slender tree, but the fear-blind animals were on the brink—slipping—toppling over—starting back with shrill cries almost human in their agony. Too late to regain their footing—another moment and the frail check must give way and all go over the precipice together.

(To be continued.)

The Sea-Cat:

OR, THE WITCH OF DARIEN.

A STORY OF THE BUCCANEERS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.

compelled to rely on currents of the sea to transport it in search of food; and thus its voracious maw is ever unsatisfied, and the avidity with which it seizes on a prey is always the terrible longing of semi-starvation.

Now it had risen to the surface from the bottom of the sea, where it had been lying in wait for prey like a cat, attracted by the appearance of the galleon, which it took for a living creature, and especially by the sight of Dona Inez looking over the taffrail.

At the first blow of the ax, the long feeler, at the end of the arm which encircled the girl, thrashed madly and blindly about, while hundreds of little mouths opened in the under surface of the deadly coils and began to tear and suck at the poor victim's flesh.

The Biscayan, fearless of the flying weapon that thrashed about the quarter-deck, heaved up the ax again, with a muttered curse of desperation, and dealt a second blow at the same place.

The blow was effectual, for it divided the writhing, snake-like arm, and a flood of dark, horrible blood spouted from the wound over the white deck. The coils around the Spanish maiden relaxed and fell nerveless from her, when Morgano snatched her away to the other side of the deck, and laid her senseless body on the guns, out of sight of the glaring eyes of the terrible sea-cat.

And he was only just in time to do it; for the rest of the huge arm, where it was not cut off, kept feeling and gliding about, as if nothing had happened, reaching further and further at every writhing. Meanwhile in the waist of the ship, matters were at a terrible pass. When Morgano looked down from the lofty after-castle, the sight caused even his iron nerves to shudder a moment.

Those writhing arms, eight in number altogether, were twisting, twisting and lashing about on the decks among the crew. Two of them, each with a shrieking, struggling victim encoiled, rose up in the air as he looked, and were recovered over the side toward those terrible jaws, only to return, empty, for more victims. The braver portion of the crew were cowering, huddled at the sea, with axes, and had already succeeded in severing two, but the result appeared not to inconvenience the sea-cat to any extent.

Like all animals of the low organization of the radiates, the sea-cat seems to be insensible to pain, and unharmed unless attacked at the center of its system.

And the center of that mass of writhing hideousness was slowly but surely lifting itself up the side of the galleon, by the strength of its mighty arms, so that the glaring eyes might be able to see the prey those arms were now blindly seeking for.

Then it was that the damnable buccaneer suddenly leaped from the after-castle, ax in hand, and flung himself into the *melee* below, fearless of the monster.

Two fierce blows, and one of the arms was divided close to the bulwark, while Morgano pressed close to the stump, streaming black blood as it was, knowing that there was the only place of comparative safety. The deck was strewn with weapons, dropped from the hands of victims; five men had already been smothered overboard to a fearful doom; the rest, paralyzed with terror at the apparent uselessness of their efforts, had sunk on their knees to pray for mercy, when the loud shout of the Biscayan roused them anew.

"For shame, cowards! If ye must die, die fighting! Boarding-pikes here! The sea-cat will be aboard in a minute! *Stab him in the eyes, when you see them!*"

As he spoke, one of the long arms wrapped itself round the mainmast, and grew rigid as a column of iron, while it became evident that the terrible body was rising up from the sea.

"Pikes! pikes!" yelled the Biscayan, and at the word, the men gathered fresh courage, and ran to him with weapons. He dropped the ax, and seized a long pike, just as the black, rounded mass of the creature's head rose over the bulwarks. The remaining arms, four in number, were all attached to various parts of the ship, and straining violently to raise the body, so that a moment's respite from death was afforded the cowardly Spaniards. They clustered behind the bold Biscayan, who stood behind their leader, holding their pikes with trembling hands.

Then, with a sudden slippery surge, the great black pulpy mass of the monster's body flopped over the rail, with huge glaring eyes standing far out of its head, a gaping maw below, and came down with a heavy squelch on the deck!

In the same instant, all of the mighty arms detached their hold, like lightning, and darted writhing among the crew.

For now the sea-cat could see its prey. But if its means of offense were thus intensified, its defense was at the same time weakened. The one vulnerable point, the eye, was within reach; and deep into that eye the buccaneer drove the long pike, while fifty similar weapons, plunged with the energy of despair into the same vulnerable place, and into the soft pulpy belly of the fearful monster, transfixed it in a moment to the blood-stained deck of the galleon.

The sea-cat quivered all over; and its mighty arms, no longer sentient, coiling weapons, obedient to the will, shook and thrashed blindly about, till they slowly stiffened in death. Even in death their wild blows struck down several sailors and soldiers, and swelled the ghastly roll of slaughter. But it was only the expiring effort of the creature. In a few minutes it had ceased to quiver, and lay still and stiff, the black blood welled over the deck in streams, while the triumphant Biscayan turned coolly away, and accosted Don Alonso as if nothing had happened, saying:

"Senor Espinosa, now we will hoist out the boat, if you please. The sea-cat never hunts in couples."

CHAPTER V.

THE BUCCANEERS' RENDEZVOUS.

Five years have rolled their round away, and the scene changes to the edge of the tropic forests of Darien. The perpendicular stems of enormous trees tower aloft on every side, with a maze of tangled lianas stretching from bush to bush overhead, and well-nigh shutting out the intense glare of the tropic sun, so that all beneath was a delicious bower of cool verdure. The ground had been cleared of all the luxuriant vegetation below by the hand of man, and the flowers were blooming fifty feet overhead, every vine loaded with its own separate species, while the wild jasmine, tuberose, and night-blooming cereus covered the trunks of many an old tree.

At the edge of this forest, in a partial clearing, which opened on a green savanna to the north, a group of men were gathered around the form of a woman, who appeared to hold sway over them, from the deference which they paid to her.

The men were Indians, armed with bows, arrows, and spears; the woman was to all seeming of white blood, although completely civilized in costume and surroundings. Her form had all the delicate symmetry peculiar to the Caucasian race, when untrammelled and undeformed by fashion, and her large liquid brown eyes and curling hair, as well as the pale

tint of her skin, sufficiently marked the superiority of her race over that of the coarse-haired copper-hued Indians around her.

Her dress, what there was of it, was of the most costly materials, a crown or diadem of gold, set with rough emeralds of great size, and a short skirt reaching to the knees, made of strings of gold beads, in the form of a long heavy fringe, which, by its weight, always adjusted itself to the movements of the wearer. The rest of her body and limbs, graceful and rounded as those of a Greek statue, were unadorned with clothing, and yet, from the force of purity and chastity in the face of the girl, seemed as proper and decent as if robed in a nun's habit. The diadem on her head was crowned with white plumes, and she bore in her hand a slender spear made of solid gold, which seemed to be her ensign of royalty.

The Indian Queen looked across the open savanna, on the further side of which lay the open sea, and watched, with an eager gaze, the sails of a vessel that was standing toward the shore.

The presence of several other vessels, lying at anchor in the mouth of a river to the right, announced the presence of white men, in probably familiar intercourse with the Indians of Darien.

"The king of the strangers approaches, Chepo, I know his ship. 'Tis larger than all the rest," said the queen, to a grizzled old Indian. "Run back; hasten; rouse the tribe to receive and welcome him."

The old Indian bowed his face to the earth, and then turned away and hastened into the depths of the forest, when the queen continued: "And you, Natato, go and prepare the palace in the air, with a feast such as the strange king loves; and I, Lola, Queen of Darien, will go among the strangers to meet him."

"Great queen," said one of the Indians, respectfully, "is not safe for you to go among the white devils alone. Remember how fierce and rude they are, and how they have treated the maidens who have ventured among them."

"Did I not say the white king was coming, and am I not a child of the sun as he is? Let them harm me if they dare, and the king will punish them."

"But we can not be certain that yonder vessel holds their king," persisted Natato. "These strangers seem to be at war with the other white devils, who have robbed us of our country, but they are devils themselves."

"Fool," said Lola, in a tone of vexation, "am I not the daughter of the sun, and Queen of Darien, and have I not asked the gods when the stranger should come that should deliver us from the power of the Spaniards? 'Twas the gods that promised us a deliverer: and yonder he comes as they promised. Follow me, and fear naught; the good gods themselves protect Lola, daughter of the sun and the sea."

As she spoke she moved forward with stately grace, and the submissive Indians followed her in silence, but full of apprehensions, to a spot on the sea-shore, where the savanna grass came down nearly to high-water mark, whence the sound of boisterous merriment proceeded.

There, scattered in groups around a huge fire, at which a hog was roasting whole, sat, lay or stood, a number of bearded men, rough and fierce in expression, but all dressed with a singular mixture of magnificence and neglect. All wore armor or buff coats, in either case richly worked in gold and silver. Some were crowned with gayly plumed beavers others, with morions of steel in the fashion of a previous century, or caps of leather, iron-bound, such as were introduced by Cromwell. Yarets, satins, and laces abounded in their dress, with boots of red or yellow morocco; but most of these were doted with grease, and with sleeping on the ground, while laces were tattered, boots in holes, and feathers battered, some more, some less.

But the weapons of the party—and all were armed with sword, pistol, musketoon, or halberd—were in splendid condition, of the most gorgeous character in ornament, and ready for immediate use.

Such as they were, these jolly ruffians were drinking from a cask of wine that stood on the sand, with the head knocked out, and all were alternately eying the roasting pig and the approaching vessel while conversing.

"The admiral will be right glad when he hears of our success," said a black-browed ruffian, in broken French-English, "for 'tis not every day that such a fort is taken by assault; and the Spanish dogs fought well, we must admit."

"Ay ay, Lenoir, but that was only because they had no hole to creep to," responded a flaxen-headed giant, whose accent bespoke him as English. "Had the canoe had a hole in it, they would have fled long ere they did. Well, well, after all, there was not much plundering, and the men fell like rotten sheep in taking it. Porto Bello was something like a sack. Wine and women and gold in plenty. But here was naught but a heap of ashes, and plenty of wounds to get for one's share."

Boom! went a gun from one of the anchored ships, and in a moment more it was taken up by the rest in turn, as they thundered out a salute to their approaching comrade; and the incoming ship sent forth gun for gun in answer.

Up, lads, and carry the admiral up the hill to the castle," cried Lenoir. "Give him a regular buccaneer welcome, and we'll have a jolly carouse to-night!"

At the word all the buccaneers scrambled to their feet, and hastened down to the harbor, where the strange vessel was just dropping her anchor, and across whose waters a large canoe, decorated with costly hangings from an awning, was paddling to shore, urged by a dozen buccaneers. In the high curving prow stood a glittering figure, in cuirass and helmet of steel, with black and scarlet dress, covered with gold, and shaded by a long white plume.

"The admiral! Long live Morgan, the King of the Buccaneers!" roared the crowd, as the canoe approached the shore, and as the buccaneer admiral landed, he was surrounded by a crowd of his enthusiastic followers, who caught him on their shoulders in triumph, and carried him up a hillock that sloped down to the river's mouth, on whose summit could be discerned the still smoking ruins of the once formidable castle of Chagres.

For at Chagres it was, then only a castle with its garrison, that the greatest and most famous expedition of the buccaneers was now assembled; and it was the chief of all the freebooters of the Spanish main, who well deserved the title of "King of the Buccaneers," Morgan himself, who now approached the rendezvous of his comrades, preparatory to his great expedition against Panama. The buccaneers already arrived had stormed Chagres the day before, and Morgan, who had been collecting succor for his friends at Jamaica and elsewhere, was but just come to join them.

Up the hill and amid the ruins they carried him, shouting and singing, all talking together and telling of the incidents of the fight; while the chief, silent and somewhat saturnine as usual, quietly listened to all the stories, without changing a muscle of his countenance. At last he opened his own lips a moment, only to say: "Hold your prate. This was naught but the beginning. The riches will come when Panama shall be taken. To-night be merry. To-morrow we start on our journey. Set me down."

Their noisy enthusiasm subsided in a moment under his quiet and somewhat contemptuous manner. The wily chief well knew the secret of keeping his men at a distance and in awe. At a sign he was placed on his feet, and waved them away. Then he was about to give some orders, when he suddenly started, became pale, and fixed his eyes on an object without the group, ejaculating:

"Dona Inez! No, it can not be! Who in God's name are you?"

And the buccaneers became suddenly aware that Queen Lola had come nigh to them, unseen, and stood looking at Morgan.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOVERNOR'S SON-IN-LAW.

In a lofty and magnificently-fitted apartment in the city of Panama stood Don Alonso del Campo y Espinosa, talking to a very gorgeously-appeared military gentleman, whose person was about as handsome as could be found, while his regular face, adorned with magnificent mustache and beard, would have been pleasing for its beauty, but for the air of conceit and intolerable arrogance affected by so many handsome men, especially Spaniards.

Don Alonso looked a little older than when we saw him first, but his eye was still bright, and his step firm.

"Tell me, captain, what you have discovered about the pirates and their intentions," said the Governor.

"I told you, and have they reported?"

"They have come in this morning, not an hour ago," said the captain, in a tone of importance. "Luis Mendoza has not been a soldier for naught, your excellency. The whole of the track from here to Chagres is full of our friendly Indians, who will trot backward and forward with news as the foreign devils advance. As yet they have done nothing, except to attack our fort at Chagres, which, as your excellency well knows, is capable of defying all their forces."

"I know nothing out of my own sight, Don Luis," said the Governor, gravely. "One would have thought Porto Bello impregnable, save to artillery and regular assaults, and yet the pirates took it, with only four hundred men, against a garrison of five hundred."

"I was not there, your excellency," said Don Luis Mendoza, with an air of ineffable importance. "And your excellency was not there either," he added, as if to detract from his own arrogance. "Had we been—how you knows, Don Alonso—we might have captured the devil Morgan and all his fellow devils."

"Killed them, perhaps, never taken them," said Espinosa. "You have never seen these pirates, or you would not talk so. I have been in a ship of forty guns when a canoe, with some fifty of these desperate men, attacked us; and by heavens, Luis, I fear they would have taken us but for an accident. I never yet saw men so totally devoid of fear. I am no coward myself, but I freely confess they caused me to tremble when I saw the effect of their presence on the crew of my galleon. They became like dying men for fear; and think of it, Luis, *Inez was on deck when they tried to board us!*"

"Would I had been there, too!" said Don Luis. "I would have scattered the dogs of heretics! But what saved your excellency?"

"A passenger, whom I have since discovered to be none other than the redoubtable Morgan himself, though he was then in disguise."

"For Dios!" was Mendoza's only remark. "Ay, Luis. He ordered off the pirates; and we were saved, only to fall into a fresh peril, from which, too, he saved us by his skill and daring. We were attacked by the monstrous cut-throat they call the sea-cat, and he it was who cut in under the monster's arms, and finally slew it. He went ashore at St. Lucia as mysteriously as he came aboard, and we never saw him again."

"And how did your excellency find out that it was the pirate?"

"Inez told me, long afterward. She had found him out by his name, which he had hardly disguised. It was not so well known then as since."

Don Luis started, and a frown contracted his handsome face.

"And she never told me all this," he muttered.

His cogitations, of whatever nature, were interrupted by the entrance of Dona Inez herself, modest and beautiful as ever, but no longer wearing the semi-conventional dress of yore. Inez del Campo, in obedience to her father's will, and without a feeling of love, had married Don Luis Mendoza, captain of her father's guards, and he to a dukedom, a year before. She had been taught filial obedience as her first duty, and had none of our modern romantic thoughts about love. Obedient, gentle and true, she had yet lived almost apart from her husband since their marriage, he, on his part, acquiescing in an arrangement that left him free to pursue his gallantries elsewhere.

But, indifferent as was Don Luis, he would have been no Spaniard had he not been jealous as fire. The mere notion of his wife having a secret from him angered him. It was in a tone of annoyance, with a flashing eye, that he addressed her now.

"So, madam, your ladyship did not see fit to tell me that you had secrets with the pirates?"

Dona Inez looked at him, amazedly.

"What secrets? What do you mean, senor?"

"I mean—" he began, but Don Alonso interrupted him.

"Stop, stop; you forget whom you speak to, and in whose presence," he said, gravely. "Don Luis Mendoza, this lady is a Governor's daughter, and, as such, merits to be addressed as befits her station."

"She is my wife, your excellency—" began Mendoza, angrily.

"And I am your superior officer, senor," said Espinosa, sternly. "This lady is my daughter and my heiress. Do you understand? When you speak in my presence, remember the tone of voice."

Don Luis looked sullen, but made no answer. Inez, in a gentle tone of voice, addressed him, herself:

"Nay, Luis, be not angry with me without cause. I would have told you all long ago had you but asked me. But, indeed, the remembrance of that terrible day, wherein I underwent such peril, is so painful to recall, that I have striven to forget it. Think of it, Luis! I was encircled by the slimy grasp of that odious monster, and in an instant moment should have died! I have not yet recovered from the shock. Could I betray him to inevitable death when he had saved my life? He confessed to me who he was, and threw himself on my mercy."

"And you spared him," said Mendoza, sarcastically. "I suppose he was a handsome cavalier?"

"Far from it," interrupted her father. "He was a short, square man, with no beauty of face or person to recommend him; nothing but his wonderful strength and courage. Come, Luis, be reasonable. You have no cause for jealousy. I assure you. I have lost one child already in the bowels of the sea. Let me see the other happy with the husband I have chosen for her. Happy that your future fortunes will depend on your behavior to her. The duke, your father, is not rich, and I have not made my will yet."

He spoke the last words with great meaning, and left the room as he said them. Don Luis remained biting his lip, something like a sulky schoolboy.

"What did the Governor mean by losing a child?" he asked, presently, in a more pacific tone. "I thought you were his only child, but it seems I know nothing of the secrets of your family."

"I am his only child now, alas, that it should be so," said Dona Inez, sadly. "But did you not ever hear that my mother was drowned when I was only three years old, and that my only sister was lost with her?"

"No," said Mendoza, in a tone of curiosity, "how was it?"

"She was coming over to join my father, who was then Governor of Cartagena. I was left behind, in the convent at Madrid, to be educated there, but my mother took with her the little Pepita, a babe at the breast. The ship departed from Cadiz, and was never heard of again; and it is only known that pieces of the wreck were found in the sea, on the coasts of Yucatan. My father still keeps poor Pepita's birthday as a day of mourning. Were she alive she would be eighteen, this year."

Don Luis said nothing aloud, but as he turned away to the window he muttered:

"So much the better. There are less to share Espinosa's savings."

"Poor Pepita," said Inez, sadly; "God knows how willingly I would give up all claim to my father's fortune, were it only possible that my sister were alive. But alas, she and our mother rest in peace at the bottom of the deep ocean. But tell me, Luis, what is it makes any father and you so grave to-day? There is some mysterious danger in the air and no one will tell me what it is."

"It is your gallant friends, the robbers," said Mendoza, in a sarcastic tone, "who are coming to redeem their promise of taking Panama, if they can. The pirates have attacked the castle at Chagres, and our brave soldiers have beaten them back in disgrace. My messengers brought in the news this morning."

He had hardly finished the news, when a loud murmur was heard in the streets below, which rose into cries of terror and rage, as the tumult came nearer and nearer to the Governor's palace.

Don Luis changed color, and went to the window. Below, he saw a confused crowd running rapidly towards the palace, crowding around the figure of a horseman, with bloody armor and bandaged head, who was riding slowly forward, evidently engaged in telling some story to the crowd as he went.

"More news. Pray heaven it be not bad!" ejaculated Inez. "Oh, Luis, see the poor man! He is wounded!"

Don Luis hastily left the room and rushed down to the court, which he found full of the Governor's Guards, in their gorgeous uniforms, while Don Alonso himself, with grave, anxious face, was standing on the palace steps, awaiting the horseman's approach.

"The lieutenant of the castle at Chagres," said the Governor to Mendoza, in a low tone. "You told me they had beaten off the pirates."

"So help me all the saints, my runners told me so this morning," said Mendoza in a frightened voice.

"Let us hear what he has to say," said Don Alonso, sternly. "I have trusted you too long, Luis. Now I take command."

In a moment more the horseman had crossed the court, and slowly swung himself from his horse, as with a painful effort.

"What news, Gaspar?" asked Don Alonso, kindly. "Thou'rt wounded. Is the castle—?"

"Taken, my lord, and the garrison slaughtered without mercy," said the wounded officer faintly. "Two days we resisted their assaults, when they came on a levée as they are. We slew hundreds, but thousands took their places. At last they set fire to the palisades with flaming arrows, and the thatch of the barracks caught the blaze. Then, while we were extinguishing the flames, the buccaneers shot us down, and made a general assault. After that, I only know that I was cut down, lay for dead for hours, and woke in the night, to find the place deserted and a mass of ruins, while the pirates were carousing in triumph on the beach below. I crept away, and got into the woods, where Queen Lola's Indians helped me away, and got me a horse from a plantation on the road. The pirates have taken possession of the road. The day, however, are on the march hither, to take Panama."

"And the Indians, can they be depended on, think you?" asked the Governor, keenly. "Did they treat you well?"

"They seemed to be hesitating which side to join," answered Gaspar. "Were it not for their queen, they would have attacked the pirates in the rear when they assaulted us; but they told me that Queen Lola was well affected toward the strangers."

"Have you ever seen this queen of theirs?" asked Don Alonso.

"No, senor. She keeps herself secluded in some mysterious bower, which the Indians told me was up in the air, among the birds. They say that she is unfriendly to us, and no one knows what manner of woman she is. One of them told me that she was the daughter of the sun and the sea, and that they found her on the sea-shore at sunrise. But she hates us, and favors the pirates. So much is certain."

Don Alonso compressed his lips.

"Then she must be removed, or slain. As his majesty's victory, I have power over all these Indians. Luis, come hither."

He drew the captain of the guards aside, and gave him some orders, in a low tone of voice.

On that same evening, Don Luis Mendoza, splendidly armed and mounted, and attended by a squad of splendid cavaliers, left the city of Panama, at dusk, and took the road to Chagres. As he went, he issued certain orders to every Indian he met, and mysterious signals echoed through the forest for miles around.

And on that same evening it was, that Morgan the buccaneer first met, face to face, Queen Lola of Darien, and marveled at her likeness to Inez del Campo.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 161.)

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Saturday Journal

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The Dumb Spy of the Des Moines.

A ROMANCE OF THE BLACK HAWK COUNTRY.

BY OLL COOMES.

One hardly knows which most to admire—this author's story proper, or the exquisite photograph of the Men and Women of the Border which each story presents. His story is always strange, original and teeming with surprises; while his characters are so living and real that we are inclined to regard the whole narrative as one of fact rather than of fancy.

Old Hurricane is a forest Hercules—just such a man as almost every settler has seen or heard of, whose dislike of the Indian led him to become a Man-Hunter; but without, so honest, brave and good that we love him at once.

The DUMB SPY is a new character in American Fiction, and a very fine character too—speechless, relentless, and yet trusty as steel itself.

It is a great pleasure to lay such stories as this before our expectant audience, since it is so timely in manner and matter that it will give immense satisfaction.

Our Arm-Chair.

Our Sketch Writers.—The character of a paper is greatly determined by its short stories and sketches. Its serials may be ever so good and popular, but they are stately guests and we greatly miss the chatter, and excitement and feeling of the story-teller who deals with everyday episodes, or who relates some experience or adventure sure to enlist attention. Indeed, it may be said the short stories and minor matter of the paper determine its most essential qualifications to be regarded as a family and fireside journal, for young folks and old first read the miscellany and sketches, and make them the subject of their remarks.

A great many years' experience in catering for popular taste has led us to place a higher estimate upon the value of these seemingly minor features than is common with our contemporaries; and, carrying out our idea, we have called around us some of the best sketch and short story writers in the country. As a consequence, the SATURDAY JOURNAL has won a most enviable reputation in this speciality. No paper now published presumes to vie with us in the variety and excellence of our minor matter.

In the line of love story, pure and simple, what writer of today can compare with the charming Mrs. Mary Reed Crowell? In the combined love and dramatic delineation, who is more intensely interesting than Mrs. Jennie Davis Burton? In character and action, who can depict with more power than Frederick Whitaker, T. C. Harbaugh and Col. Prentiss Ingraham? In the border story and camp-fire yarn, who is at all comparable with our own Ralph Ringwood and young Bruin Adams? In tales of Indian and Frontier life, who writes with more power and intimate personal knowledge of the field than Joseph E. Badger and Major Max Martin? In homely life and the odd side of human nature, who is so entertaining as Eben E. Rexford and Mattie Dyer Britts?

It may seem invidious to mention these where numerous others who cater for our pages are so good; but these names, we may assume, have won a distinctiveness that entitles them to special recognition. Of writers in other departments we shall have something to say in a future number.

The New Wine Process.—Among recent discoveries in "applied science," one of the most interesting is that relative to wine. It is found that by heating the product of the vineyard, the wine gains immeasurably in quality. Indeed, from a common vintage some of the best and rarest wines in the world can be perfectly reproduced. So greatly has this discovery changed the entire aspect of the trade, that some of the old cellars in Europe, whose contents have been regarded as almost priceless, are suddenly dethroned, and the vintage of one year is placed on a level with the wine-grower of half a century ago.

The French Academy of Sciences has obtained the following formula or rules to govern the application of the heat:

1. If we heat new wines rich in soluble matters we give them the character of the wines of Spain and Portugal.
2. In the application of heat, we must take into consideration the amount of alcohol contained in the wine; its viscosity (proportion of alcohol) permitting us to lower the degree of heat needful for its improvement and conservation.
3. The age of a wine has a very great influence upon the character which it presents after heating. This process does not succeed with old wines.
4. It is equally needful to take account of the time the wine has been in the wood and in bottle.
5. Heating gives in general excellent results with white wines. In applying it to new wines, still rich in soluble matters, we preserve in them that precious quality technically known as "liquor."
6. The degree of heat is a capital point; that suitable for superior kinds of Burgundy, rich in alcohol, is 112° F. There exist, in fact, for each wine, peculiar conditions in heating, which must be obtained by experiment with the products of each vintage.

We are no advocate of general wine-drinking; but, since the growing of the grape has now be-

come one of the great industries of the country, and wine-making and wine-drinking are to become as much a matter of course with us as in France or Spain, it is well to be informed on this discovery, that our American product may be as good as it is possible to make it, commercially and dietetically.

Chat.—A leading religious Weekly is after the Chromo "premium" disseminators with a "sharp stick." It says, among other things: "There have been some good pictures distributed, but there has been a wholesale degradation of art by the wholesale scattering of miserable dubs which are absolutely worth nothing. The fraud is evident," and the Watchman (well named) adds this very pertinent reminder, for the consideration of that glibbie portion of the public who subscribed for a paper to obtain a "chromo" worth three or four times the price of subscription:

"Publishers are not fools, nor are they so generous as to ruin themselves, financially, by giving away to every two or three dollar subscriber a chromo that can not be bought at any price for less than five dollars or some other ridiculous sum. Perhaps the original was worth five dollars—but the machine-made reproductions are dear at twenty-five cents each."

This may be "rough" on the papers that have sent out hordes of these specimens of wood-cut printing in colors, calling them "chromos;" but, to all in the trade who know how the pictures are manufactured and how comparatively trifling is their cost, the strictures will not be voted unjust. Nor does it help the matter that a large number of professedly "religious" weeklies have helped to spread these Cheap Johns of art, since these weeklies are just as much published to make money as the most secular and popular papers, and to obtain a circulation they are just as likely to "stretch the blanket" as any other class of business men.

LOOK AT HOME.

We go to church on Sunday, and, when we come home, we comment on Miss Snapper being so inattentive to the sermon, and, "wasn't it a shame now for her to be fixing her ribbons in the midst of so fine a discourse as that was?" Perhaps if we had been attending to the same discourse we shouldn't have known what Miss Snapper was doing. Did you ever see the matter in that light?

Mr. Jenks' boys come to see our boys, and there happens to be a little unpleasantness between them, of course it is not the fault of our boys, but that of the Jenks tribe. Our boys never have any tempers to control, they never quarrel with any one, their doings are perfection, and are—in our estimation—so nearly like angels that it is a wonder we can keep them out of heaven; but, as for the Jenks tribe—everybody knows what they are, and, what can you expect from them?

That's all detestable. Our *barms* are no better than other folks', and sometimes a deal worse; and although we can never be made to think so, it certainly is high time it should be brought home to us.

We go into our neighbor's house and find fault because there may be stray threads on the carpet, or dust on the curtains; but we don't think that we have neglected our own household to pry into our neighbor's, or that it would have been better if we had been sure our house was free from blemishes. To make our own homes more tidy, and to live our own hearts with charity, it is first quite proper to be blind and unmindful in regard to the shortcomings of our friends and neighbors.

We talk about, and make sport of, our friends' hobbies, and wonder what makes them possess such singular habits, tastes and wishes, forgetting all the while that we may have hobbies and tastes ten times more ridiculous ourselves. Let us get rid of our own follies ere we make fun of those in others.

If our articles for the press are rejected, it is not because they are poor. Oh, no! It is because the editor is not possessed of good judgment, or he is partial in his decision, or he wants to crush our talents. Were I an editor (may Heaven keep me from filling so unthankful a position!) and any one were to say that to me, I'd box his ears until they smarted with pain; that is, if I could get near enough. I'll be bound editors feel provoked clear through, and would like to carry my precept into practice.

We go home to dinner half an hour late, and complain because the meat and potatoes are cold, when, if we had been home in season, that meal would have been warm. We blame others when the blame lies with ourselves. When will the day arrive when we shall examine ourselves, and see that the many faults we give our fellow-beings credit—or discredit—for, have their counterpart in us?

Because our young-ones don't learn as fast as some else's do, we accuse the teacher of being negligent and partial, and giving his attention more to Brown's children, because Brown happens to be blessed with a little more money than we are. That's not a made-up story, for I can vouch for its truthfulness. Such actions as these put us in a most unfavorable and ridiculous light, and the finger of derision should be pointed at us until we changed our tactics, and became more acquainted with our own shortcomings, and less inclined to make mountains out of our neighbors' mole-hills.

We can remedy the evil—for it is an evil—for we can pay exclusive attention to our own concerns. If we really want to hunt for disagreeable traits, let us peer right down into our own hearts, and then, having found out our faults, let us strive to correct them. "It is never too late to mend," is an old adage, but there's another that runs, "It is never too soon to commence reform."

There's a certain young lady who I hope and sincerely trust will take what I have said to heart, and endeavor in the future to practice that charity to others which she is so fond of writing about; and not to make too much of a mystery of the case, I will impart her name to you—it is

Foolscap Papers.

The Siege of Troy.

DESCEND upon me, oh, shades of immortal Homer, that I may describe in words of great import and good grammar the great deeds which were done at the renowned siege of Troy!

Oh, memory of the time a man last kicked me in mistake! Rise before my excited vision, that I may paint in pictures of crimson the sanguine scenes of that memorable event!

Wife, drop a hot iron on my foot, that my heroic feelings may be worked up to the sublimest point of war!

Ten thousand pens stand obedient to my call, and nine thousand bottles of red ink close at hand!

Let me talk of this event as if I were talking out of the mouth of a cannon.

Let my points be the points of bayonets, and my words be as powder in the pockets of the reader, with the double concentrated force of nitro-glycerine, combined with unabridged lightning and number one mother-in-law!

Let these words take good hold upon you,

and throw you down and tramp upon you, and may you be struck by them so forcibly that you will never forget them when you look at the bumps over your eyes.

The Trojans had fled from the Greeks into the city of Troy for safety, and had closed the gate, and put a throng against it to keep the Greeks out, and locked it securely and felt comparatively safe.

The Greek army camped about the city and settled down for good, for they knew they would have to besiege that city for ten years before the Trojans would besiege them in the name of mercy to go away from there.

The Greeks took the entire charge of the city for twenty years, as they had nothing particular to do, and all had wives at home, and they had sworn to whip the Trojans if it took all their summers, including their Fourth of July's, to do it.

The Trojans would walk around on the tops of their walls, and spit down on the Greeks, and this was very aggravating to their heroic souls. Time and again did they try to scale those walls, but they had no scales and failed. Once, indeed, did a few of the Greeks succeed in picking the lock of the gate of Troy, but they were all captured suddenly, and excused themselves by saying they only wanted to have a little sport by swinging on the gate.

Often a daring Greek would attempt to crawl under it, but he would be caught by a policeman when about half in and get kicked out with all the horrors of war.

Often at night the Trojans would steal out of the city, and while the Greeks were sound asleep, dreaming of pay-day, they would bind them hand and foot, and then proceed to cut the hair within an inch or an inch and a half of their lives, until they begged for mercy.

One of the most cruel things which characterized the beginning of this great siege was the device of the Trojans of letting down half-pint bottles of Indiana whiskey from the walls, and when a Greek patriot came stealing up after it, they would drop a rock on him, and, if he couldn't stand the pressure, he would go into the ground. This inhuman strategy was carried to excess until the European and United States Ministers were obliged to interfere and stop it. Nearly one-half of the Greek army was thus cut off, or drove in, as it were; and also cruel advantage was taken of the Greeks—who would come up on a hot day and go to sleep in the shade of the walls—by picking their pockets with a long pole, with a hook on the end of it, or by yelling "Breakfast's ready," and disturbing their slumbers.

This horrible code was finally done away with by foreign intervention, and once, while the Greeks were celebrating St. Patrick's day in the morning, the Trojans came out and piled every one of them up in piles eight feet high, and laid boards, with huge rocks on top of them, to keep them down. The Greeks knew nothing of it until next morning, when they found themselves corded up and half-dead. This act was considered by the world as the greatest outrage of the war. The Trojans shortly after apologized for it.

Every time the Greeks got a battering-ram in position to batter the wall, the Trojans would let down a rope and lasso the machine and haul it up, but they would receive such a shower of oaths they would have to fall back, knocked clear off the wall.

Don Quixote, who commanded the Greeks, surveyed the walls of Troy every day, but found no flaws in them. He announced that they were the best put up job he had ever seen; and, in fact, it was a regular put-up job on the Greeks, for the wall of Troy was nothing but a paper imitation of a granite wall, with the intent to deceive somebody.

The Greeks made various attempts to reduce the city, besides trying to reduce the population. They tried to dig under it and let it fall in; they tried to burn it by knocking it down; they tried to burn it by the spy could find out where Mrs. O'Leary lived with her cow, but they never gave up. They said they had come before Troy on business and had brought their dinners and meant to stay, and that Troy nor Albany together could not dislodge them unless the Legislature was there.

In the mean time, the Greek vessel, *Alabama*, was abroad on the seas, playing smash with the Trojan vessels, and making "claims."

For ten long years did the siege continue. What a long time to wait! It was a very heavy weight (this was the origin of Troy weight). All the Greeks' wives at home had married again. It was discouraging.

As a last resort the Greeks got a large hog-head on a wagon and filled it with men, left it before the gate of Troy and marched away. The hog-head was labeled "Old Rye, 1856." The Trojans felt like taking it in. At night they unlatched the gate and did so. While they were hunting around for a spigot and some glasses, the soldiers inside got out, took the gate off its hinges, and let the Greeks, who had returned, come in. The town was bagged and sacked, and afterward presented to the State of New York, where she has resumed her former glory.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

Two Successful Women.—The Young Dressmaker's Story.—What is Success.—A Contrast.—The Lesson.—We can not make Oats of Pines.

ONE morning last week chance led me to the establishment of a young dressmaker, one who has just commenced "business for herself." She rents a whole residence for her establishment on Seventeenth street, and it is handsomely furnished throughout. On her center-table are some rare volumes of "Costumes of All Ages," and a "scrap-book," which she commenced twelve years ago when she was a little girl working at three dollars a week, in the dress-making department at Stewart's great dry-goods palace. That old scrap-book shows the early artistic proclivities of the young dressmaker, for dress-making is a fine, if not a high art. No two pages in that scrap-book are alike, and the ornamentation in water-colors, done by her own hand, are positively Medieval in their character. Where the young girl found her models is as much a mystery as where she gets the designs of the "creations" in the way of dresses she makes for her customers. It is not poets alone who are "born not made." Marie M. was born a dressmaker, or artist in costumes. Moreover, she was born practical, sensible, judicious and discreet. I use both those last adjectives intentionally, for to be discreet and to be judicious are two very different things. I have known some very discreet women who were extremely injudicious, and I have known others who frequently spoiled the results of their judicious reckonings by a want of that very needful discretion in the moment of action.

But, to return to my young dress artist. When a little girl only twelve years old, she began her trade at Stewart's, receiving, as I said, only three dollars a week. Of course this did not support her. Her parents, working people like herself, were not unwilling to have their child work even for that small sum, while she was learning her trade. She was blessed with perfect health, having never known what a day's sickness was, and as she now says, "never had an ache or pain in her life." Her wages were gradually increased, until she left

her first employers, four years ago, honorably resigning a place where she was earning twenty-five dollars a week, to go to one where she was offered thirty dollars. This sum was gradually increased at the last establishment to forty dollars per week.

In the mean time, with rare tact, this young woman had made friends for herself among the numerous ladies who had their dresses made at the two places where she had worked. I said with rare tact. I mean with unconscious tact, for she had no particular object in conciliating their favor. For two years before she left her last employers to begin business for herself, she was trusted with the entire charge of the dress department. Till within a few days before she resigned her position, she had no idea of doing so, and an accidental, or Providential, circumstance, as unexpected to herself as to any one else, determined her to offer her resignation. She had, in the twelve years she had been a working woman, laid up several thousand dollars, which were at interest in bank. Her banker became interested in her, and other persons of means and influence were not wanting to aid her in acting for herself. Such merit, and good temper, and beauty, all combined, had their usual bearings on the young woman's fortune and future. She no sooner mentioned the circumstance which made it a duty for her to leave the house where she was employed, than she found herself step forward to aid her in her determination.

What this circumstance was we will leave to the imagination of our readers. She would have left, even if she had been thrown out of employment for months or years, instead of a few days. She did her duty and met her reward.

On the morning I called to see her, I found her busy as a bee, amid a band of workers, fifteen girls who had followed her from the establishment which she had left a few weeks ago. Orders were coming in rapidly, all the most fashionable customers having followed their most favorite artist and dressmaker. She was evidently "a Success."

I have told you, dear ladies, all this long story about Marie to point a moral, namely: that a woman to be successful in life need not go out of the ordinary occupations to which women have, until of late years, been confined. That talent, tact, application to business, combined with good health and perseverance, and even the most humble of the fields in which women are permitted, by public opinion, to labor, will bring her pecuniary success.

Now, the question forces itself on my mind: Is pecuniary success the most desirable thing for a woman? Is she really happier for owing her success to her own unaided efforts? Is this what we wish to train our American women to? Is this the haven into which we wish to steer our daughters? I do not wish to depreciate Marie. On the contrary, I admire and esteem her. But, I do not admire or esteem her one whit more, than I do a sweet and lovely, and successful woman—one who had not been trained as Marie was, and who with frail health and weaker mental as well as physical powers, has almost sunk down in life's battle, yet has preserved through all her innate purity and goodness, and sweetness; and through all has patiently worked on, earning a mere pittance, and who is not wretched nor envious, nor embittered because she has not and knows she never can accomplish what Marie has. She is sweet and cheerful, and truthful, and earnest in trying and trying again, and again, after every failure to win success from defeat.

She, too, has friends who love her no less than Marie's friends love her, and somehow, or other, I don't know how it is, with all her failures and weakness, she is strangely popular with men as well as with women. Her strength seems to lie mostly in her moral and spiritual nature, and in a way that is felt more than heard.

She is neither a silent nor a talkative woman, but has the rare gift of knowing when to speak. She is neither witty nor humorous, but she is never satirical nor sarcastic. She is industrious, but lacks what I once heard an old lady call "point." That is, she is of too contemplative a nature to be practical. She is far from being an ignorant or uncultivated woman, but, somehow or other, she does not know how to make her knowledge or cultivation "pay."

I would not have her any other than she is, for the world! She is a study, a character, quite as much as Marie M.—and since she is not unhappy because she cannot "set up in business for herself" why should her friends be unhappy for her?

Let me see if I can sum up the moral of my story of these two characters.

Both these women are successful in their way. Why? Simply because they are content with their lot, and have sought and found their true development. If a woman's nature is not degraded; if she preserves a calm, sweet, noble nature, whether financially successful or unsuccessful, she is "a perfect woman, nobly planned." She is a success.

There is not a doubt in my mind but what success in business is the sharpest and severest test to which a woman can be subjected. She is indeed a noble being who does not become imperious, hard and dogmatic, when she has accomplished her own fortune. One reason why successful business women remain single is, undoubtedly, this tendency in success to render them hard and imperious.

Men are not attracted by such women, nor are such women anxious to marry. Not that I consider marriage the most desirable thing for a woman, a thing to be accomplished at all hazards, but, as a natural conclusion, I would prefer seeing my friend or my daughter marry, rather than remain single, provided she entered into a truly sacramental relation, not a mere civil contract with the man she loved.

I certainly would not wish my daughter's practical education neglected, so that she might possess the charm of inefficiency, and therefore marry as a remedy for and consequence of that evil. No; God forbid! But, if my daughter did not possess the practical talent of a Marie M., I certainly should not grow impatient and try to make an oak out of my vine. I would give my vine just the support and pruning it needed to make it graceful, fruitful and useful. If my daughter was an oak, not a vine, by nature, I should not try to weaken that nature. I would treat her as I would an oak, and let her grow. She would not need the support of my vine. If allowed her natural development, she would grow as tall, and strong, and graceful in her strength as the young oak which waves its leafy boughs aloft against the blue sky. The branches of my oak should not be permitted to grow too low or crooked by cramping and want of air. So my stronger child would sometimes need the pruning hand of gentle kindness and firmness in tending down the sharp and hard points in her character, her tendency to rule and to dogmatize. The atmosphere of a deeply spiritual culture would be needed, lest she should grow ungovernable and hard, cramped and crooked in her nature. The breath of a divine teaching should be given to impart the outward grace imparted by an interior culture. She should be deeply rooted and grounded in the highest faith that is granted to mortality, just as I would plant my young oak only in the deepest and strongest soil.

EMILY VERDERY.

Readers and Contributors.

To CONTRIBUTORS AND READERS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared in position. No MSS. prepared for future orders. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only three stamps accompanying the enclosure, for return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MSS. as "copy;" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Seven notes on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use—all experiments and suggestions will find us ever ready to give our offerings early attention. Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to correspondence. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We can not find place for or make available the following contributions, viz.: "Popping the Question;" poem by the same author; "Old Sam's Christmas Story;" "Marriage Beside Death;" "Up the Valley;" etc.; "The Murdered Brother;" "Tale of a Tavern;" "Charlie's Sentence;" "Loved and Lost;" "Wreck of the Marie;" "The House of the Dead;" "Penny Black's Device;" "Old Biddy's Coat;" "The Convict's Escape;" "A Queen's Song;" "Night's Alarm;" "The Club-room Spirit;" "Festive Hours;" "Sketches of an Adventure;" "How Uncle Tom Changed His Will."

We use "John Wood's Housekeeping;" "Song for Spring-time;" "Could You;" "How the Burglars were Taken;" "The Baron's Daughter;" "The Our Race;" "How to Strike;" "The Penitent's Penance;" "Let's Go;" "The Convict's Escape;" "A Queen's Song;" "Night's Alarm;" "The Club-room Spirit;" "Festive Hours;" "Sketches of an Adventure;" "How Uncle Tom Changed His Will."

JIM BELL. "Ace of Spades," 60 cents; "Winged Whale," 75 cents; "Wild Nathan," 80 cents; "Adria, the Adopted," 60 cents.

CARSON. See answer to F. E. F.

CHAS. E. D. We are not sure that any of our lady readers would care to correspond with any young gentleman. We do not approve of your mode of obtaining correspondents.

L. F. JONES. We have no knowledge of the Lord Raglan steamer.

HENRY D. Appleton & Co. It is a "canvasser's" book.

THOS. P. M. Have no record whatever of the MS. referred to.

CHARLEY SEELY. Lemon juice will take freckles from the face.

W. S. R. Your MS. is very imperfect as a composition, and has no literary value. The rules for correct writing must be complied with in all contributions to the press. Editors will not add to their labors that of revising imperfect MSS.

F. E. F. "Overland Kit" will cost you 72 cents.—"Hand, Not Heart" was the first serial published in the SATURDAY JOURNAL.—The early number of the paper are not all now available. A. F. Stewart has a copy of the retail establishment now covers an area of about one acre, with seven floors for business. The wholesale store is about two acres in size.

BOY-HUNTER. We published in these columns the last story which Wayne Reid has written, "Tracked to Death," the story by Cousin May Carleton (Mrs. Fleming) will be given hereafter; a new story is on hand by Capt. J. F. Adams, on can buy new and old Friends from your newsdealer.

BRUN ADAMS. "Light-House Life, or the Firebrand of the Everglades," is the title of Capt. J. F. Adams' next story.

HAWKEYE HARRY. "The Detective's Ward" will cost you 72 cents.—The SATURDAY JOURNAL has much over 100,000 regular readers.—Carson City was named after Eli Carson.—Yessie's story, "The Penitent's Penance," Let's Go" (Beadle's Dime Series) gives explicit directions in regard to punctuation.—We know of no such paper.—Your writer is a lady of talent, and very good. CHAS. W. S. We know of no remedy to cure the taste for tobacco. Some do break off chewing the vile weed make a temporary substitute of ginseng root, or of any other thing that can be chewed. A friend of ours once broke off on white cotton during a race, which was kept constantly in his mouth. Be determined to quit the habit and stick to your determination!

DAX. Of course we can not tell if a book and paper store would do well in the place named. Nor can your friend ascertain the fact without a visit to the place.

MABEL. Really we can not advise. The law considers willful absence and refusal to support, a just cause for divorce. It is not wrong to go with any young gentleman, but it may not be discreet. If you feel that you must marry again for a support, consult some honest lawyer as to the proper course to pursue.

CARSTEN. Write to the office of the Panama Steamship Line. (Pacific Mail Steamship Co.) New York.

C. C. I. We know of no person buying the nickel cents of 1858 and 1859.

ROGER. The "Children's Aid Society" can answer better than ourselves. Texas is a good place to go to if you are resolved to push your own way. If you are of a roving disposition, as you hint, you probably won't stay long enough in any one place to make a success of any business or trade. Remember the adage, "A rolling stone gathers no moss."

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB. We believe the firm named to be great swindlers. Make inquiries of the N. Y. Police.

JOEL JONES. The deepest well in the world is at Sprenberg, near Berlin. It was excavated to and rock-salt, which was obtained at a distance of 250 feet from the surface, but the boring was continued to the depth of 4,100 feet, the stratum of salt having been followed to a depth of 3,900 feet without being pierced through, and the boring then was discontinued on account of the mechanical difficulties of the operation.

MADAME MONTJOY. To remove the stains from your hands, wash them in some soap and water in which some "pearlash" has been dissolved. Continue you wish to remove the stains of dye, take a small quantity of oil of vitriol, put it in a basin of cold water and wash your hands without soap, afterwards dip them in warm soap and water, being sure the acid is thoroughly removed before you apply the soap. If your vitriol water is not too strong, it will leave the most delicate hands with a red or rosy appearance.

FRANK AND ALFRED. To decide your discussion, permit us to say that we have no positive proof that the 25th of December is the birthday of Jesus Christ. In ancient times certain cardinal points were originally fixed by mathematicians, not only for the Feast of the Nativity, but for other feasts. Christians afterward took up what they found in calendars, and so long as a certain fixed time was commemorated for the birth of the Savior, they were content.

YANKER. The first newspaper published in the United States was at Boston, in the year 1791.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

The Girls of New York!

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

Author of "Rocky Mountain Rob," "A Strange Girl," "Witches of New York," etc., etc.,

Soon to commence in these columns, is a story well calculated to create a sensation. Without being "sensational," it is, yet, such an exposition of the

HOMES, HAUNTS AND HEARTS

Of the Great American Metropolis that even those who are most familiar with City High and Low Life will be surprised at its amazing developments, which show how deeply and intricately virtue and vice are involved in our Social System, and how near is the Madison-Avenue Parlor to the Convict's Haunts. Five young women are, each and all, though utter strangers to one another, related by the common tie of association with

John Blaine, the Escaped Convict; and the story now told, by this brilliant and searching expositor of human nature and modern society, is a series of singular, mysterious and astonishing revelations of

THE DARK SIDE AND THE BRIGHT SIDE of

REPENTANCE.

BY GEO. H. FULLERTON.

Give back thy love! Oh! hold it not,
Save thou wouldst read my heart in vain;
I mourn thee in each secret thought,
Give me thy love! give back again.

Thou knowest not how deep I mourn
For recognition as before;
Since by mine act thy love was torn
Torn from me—say not evermore!

Oh! thou wilt love me once again!
There's nothing shall be bidden me—
Nothing that thou shalt bid in vain!
Oh! speak and let me come to thee!

Yes: it was I who did transgress,
But not in anger; nor to slight
Thy precious love—my happiness—
Altho' no; so sad was I that night.

Speak! tell me all's now well;
Ope now thy heart and let me rest—
Rest in thy love, as ere I fell
From thy good-will, so richly blest.

Thou wilt? Heaven bless thee! keep thee
Be most precious blessings thine!
Thou wilt? Thou hast forgiven me?
Heaven make thee with the saints to shine!

The Beautiful Forger:

OR,
THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG GIRL.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT.

AUTHOR OF "MADEIRA'S MARRIAGE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

CHANGING CAGES.

THE outlaw had passed a sleepless night, smarting and burning with fever from his troublesome wound. No words can describe his rage when the news was brought to him. He cursed and raved, and threatened all whose business it was to secure the prisoner. How had he got out? The bars ought to have been invincible, and how had he got across the lake? For pursuit was made, why did not two or three men go? Time! No time to call them up? They ought to have been up already, so near morning! And, most important of all, was the girl gone?

No, she was safe enough. And no one suspected the pale and spectral woman who had furnished the young man with the means of breaking out.

The chief had now to apprehend a speedy visit from the legal authorities, with a demand for his captive's release. What should be done? He would have carried her off to his stronghold in the mountains at once, but his wound, and the fever resulting from it, rendered a journey dangerous to life. His leech warned Querados that it might be fatal; that it could not fail to lay him up, perhaps for many months.

The thought of Helen's deliverance was maddening to him; he could not bear to be deprived of sight he had determined should be his own, and he resorted to a desperate expedient.

Olivia's residence was not many miles distant. He determined to send his lovely prisoner to her, and that no one would ever dream of searching for her.

Olivia was bound to him not only for past obligations, but by future interests. She would not venture to disobey him. He would conceal from her his passion for the girl; he would pretend he had captured her with a view to further his fair ally's designs against Dr. Merle, whom he knew to be her father. Olivia might sway the old conjurer to her will, holding his daughter as a hostage. With this view he would say he had sent her the girl, not venturing to keep her himself so near the towns, and being disabled from a wound from taking her elsewhere.

The outlaw thought his idea a capital one. He ordered three of his men to mount, and place a side-saddle on a horse for the young girl. She had been told to get ready for instant removal.

Helen would have been in despair at these orders, but for another brief visit from the lonely lady, who had bidden her obey, without hesitation, whatever she was ordered to do. "I shall not be long," she said, "in discovering where you are concealed; and I will send word to your friends. Write it down here where they may be found."

With tears of gratitude the girl strove to express the deep obligation she felt, but the other silenced her sternly.

"I want no thanks," she said, haughtily. "I told you I did what I have done with no good-will to you. Your youth and beauty pain me, and but that you hate the chief, I might have done you harm. Do not cross his path again. Let me never see you more."

She turned and left the room without an adieu.

In a very short time Helen was conducted out of the castle, to the ground where stood her horse. She was placed in the saddle. She did not venture a word of remonstrance. Her three attendants rode one on each side, the other behind her, and at a swift pace.

She did not think of attempting an escape, for she knew well that she would soon be recaptured. Nothing had been offered her to eat in the hurry of her departure; but the keen fresh air revived her, and she felt no want of strength.

Meanwhile her active lover had lost no time in finding his way to a settlement, and had received directions where he could obtain efficient assistance. He procured a horse and rode at full speed to the post, where a small military force was stationed. He told his story to the officer in command, and was promised aid speedily. Yet it was long past noon before he was on his way to the stone castle by the lake, accompanied by the armed force detached to rescue the captive girl.

Every thing was quiet as they came to the neighborhood. The calm surface of the lake was untroubled by a single boat or canoe. The walls of the ancient building loomed up grimly from the water's edge, looking like one of the feudal castles of the middle ages, with battlements frowning over its broad moat. Not a single human being could be seen.

Walter and the leading officer dismounted before the front entrance, on the side distant from the lake, and knocked authoritatively for admission. After some delay the door was opened by a man in a herdsman's dress.

The soldiers were drawn up behind their leader. In a very few words he informed the man they were come to take away the young lady who had been brought there a prisoner the preceding evening, being illegally robbed of her freedom.

The man replied respectfully that no such person was in the house.

"He speaks falsely!" cried young Ormsley. "I followed her and her captor to this place last evening! I broke into that very room, and had a scuffle with him! He was wounded when my pistol went off, and I was overpowered by numbers, carried down stairs, and locked up in a dungeon looking on the lake. I managed to free myself, and swim for the other shore; they sent a boat after me; I knocked the boatman overboard, and took possession of the craft. Go in, gentlemen, and search the house."

"You can do so if you choose," said the man,

sullenly. "You will find no one here; at least, no lady, but those who belong here."

The procession filed into the hall. One by one Walter threw open the doors, and the rooms were searched. They were proceeding to ascend the stairs, when the young man caught a glimpse of a tall figure in woman's garments who stood at the top, and waved her handkerchief, as if entreating the intruders to come no further.

The two foremost went up a few steps, and stopped to listen to what the woman had to say.

"The young lady you are looking for," she said, very calmly, "was here last night. She is no longer here; she left this place early this morning."

"Where has she been sent?" demanded young Ormsley.

"That I am unable to tell you."

"Did she go alone?"

"I believe not."

"You may be sure not. If she is no longer here, that villain and robber has sent her away for safe keeping. But I must have proof that she is not here before I will believe it. Come on, my men."

They went on up the stairs. The woman re- ceeded as they advanced.

Walter led the way to the room where, from its being directly above his own, on the highest story, he supposed Helen had been incarcerated.

"This was her room—was it not?" he asked, as he opened the door. The woman assented.

"I see," and the youth picked up a wail of blue serge; "this is her veil. Where is she? You will gain nothing, madam, by attempting to deceive us."

"I am not deceiving you. I do not know where she is."

"We will search for her," and they went on, examining one room after another. Not even the loft was spared, nor the chamber, which the tall woman declared was her own.

Only one remained; a room at the end of the passage, with a massive oak door, stained and bruised like all the others. To this the two leaders strode, and Walter laid his hand on the latch.

The woman held up her hand forbiddingly. "You can not go in there," she said.

"Why not?"

"The door is locked."

"We shall find means to open it."

"I assure you, gentlemen, no one is there but a sick man. He is my husband; he is dangerously ill, and must not be disturbed."

"The door must be opened, madam, or we shall force an entrance."

In apparent distress, the woman beckoned Walter apart from the rest of his men.

"You must do as I say," she said, in a whisper. "You owe your liberty to me."

"To you?"

"Yes; it was I who brought the twine, paper and pencil, knife and iron rod. I dropped the pebbles under your window. I arranged the whole thing."

Walter looked up at her, in undisguised astonishment.

"I set you free, that you might release the young lady; for I did not want her here. As soon as your escape was discovered, she was sent away, with three men to escort her."

"Whither?"

"I do not know yet; but I shall learn in good time, and I will send you word. You may rely on me to do that."

"Oh, if you will, any reward—"

"Hush!" said the woman, sternly. "I want no reward; I want only to have the girl out of my husband's power. Give me directions where to send to you."

Young Ormsley wrote on a piece of card, and gave it to her.

"Very well. I have means of finding out. My husband can not stir for some time, and I will watch for his men, when they return, and send a messenger to you. You can not want the girl more than I want to send her home."

There was no mistaking the sincerity of the speaker. Walter saw that his best course was to rely on her promise. He called off the men who had accompanied him, and told them so.

With a courteous adieu to the dame, and a whispered reminder of her promise, Walter and the others went down and took their departure. The dame watched from the window till she saw them ride away. She had saved the chief from a visit, which might have cost him his life, in the feverish condition in which he lay.

CHAPTER XXI.

OLIVIA'S JEALOUSY AWAKENED.

THE party in charge of the young girl reached their destination in due time, and the leader—Pedro—sent up to the lady of the house the letter dictated by Querados.

She was alone in her chamber when she received it. Her ally and lover craved a favor at her bidding, while notifying her that he had done her a service which had resulted in a severe injury to himself. The girl was the daughter of her escaped prisoner, the conjuring doctor; and Olivia was requested to detain her and guard against her leaving the house till such time as the chief could have a personal conference with her.

"Send Pedro hither," was his first order.

"Stay; Paul is here still; he may suspect something. I will come down."

She had a conversation with Pedro, and intimated her wish that he should remain, as her own steward was absent. He readily agreed to do so, and sent the two other men back to the chief's house.

Then the lady overwhelmed Pedro with questions, to very few of which could he give answers. He knew nothing of Dr. Merle. He had only heard that he was not at his own house, which had been unoccupied since the robbery. The young lady, his daughter, was traveling with a young gentleman, when her horse had taken fright and run away. The chief, he understood, had saved her from death, and, as it was near nightfall, had taken her to his castle by the lake. The young man, whose name he did not know, had followed Querados, bursting into the house violently, and had suddenly fired on the chief, who had not expected any hostile encounter. He lay dangerously wounded, and had ordered the girl brought to her ladyship.

"And where is this hot-headed young man?" asked Olivia.

"He went off last night, and we had heard no more of him when we came away."

Pedro—as he had been instructed—took care to give the impression that the meeting of his master with the young lady was merely accidental, and his taking her home an act of generous hospitality.

"Very strange conduct, certainly," was the comment. "It looks as if he thought the young lady a prisoner against her will, and had gone to summon a force to rescue her."

The man could not tell. His master was in no state to say much. Pedro had merely received orders to bring the girl here.

"Did any one know where she was sent?"

"Not a soul, my lady; and we were bound to secrecy."

"And you can depend on your men?"

"They would be hacked in pieces, madam, before they would betray what the master had ordered them to keep hushed up."

"Very well. I will entertain the girl, as the chief wishes. I will remain in readiness to take a message to him, if I have occasion to send one."

She swept from the room, and went to the parlor, where Helen sat, in some trepidation, waiting to see what was going to become of her.

Olivia entered, smiling and gracious; took her hand, and greeted her as an old acquaintance.

"You have not forgotten me—surely? I visited you at your father's house but a few days since."

Helen recognized her. "You are Mrs. Sloman?" she said, timidly.

"And your friend? I hope you are willing to regard me as such. What is the matter?"

"The girl burst into passionate tears."

"What ails you, child?"

"Oh, madam, you know not how much I need a friend!"

"Come, you must not give way to low spirits. You are anxious about your father, I suppose?"

"I was on my way to him yesterday when—when I was seized by the robber and carried off."

"Oh, you are mistaken; he wished to serve you: he saved you from being thrown when your horse was running away: he took you home because it was so late. You must not blame him; he is a friend of mine, and a very good fellow, though, as a foreigner, a little rough in his manners."

Helen would have protested against this interpretation of the outrage perpetrated against her, but prudence checked her outspoken frankness. It might be better for her to let it go, and had not the dame, whose good offices had enabled Walter to escape, warned her not to speak of what she had suffered, and particularly to be silent concerning her own agency? She sat, therefore, in embarrassed silence.

"Come, I see you are agitated; and now I remember, Pedro said you had taken no breakfast."

Olivia touched a bell on the table, and when the servant came, ordered chocolate and biscuits at once.

"You are to be my guest for a day or two," she said, blandly, "and I want you to recover your bloom and your strength. By the way, where did you say your father was? Is he at home?"

"No, madam; he is with friends. I do not know where they live; but I was going to him yesterday. He has been very ill and out of his mind."

"Out of his mind?" echoed the lady.

"Yes, with the grief of losing me. It is a long, sad story, and I will not weary you with particulars. My father had an assistant he relied on—an Indian half-breed—who was well educated, and so useful to him, that he trusted him in all things."

"Was he a young man, very short and thick-set, with a strange voice, in general deep and strong, but sometimes so soft and oily, you would think it came from a child's throat?"

"That is the same, madam. You know him, then?"

"I have seen him. Well—go on."

"This treacherous man robbed my father, carried away his gold in his absence, and forged a note to me, saying my father had sent for me. It was all a cruel deception, and I should have been killed by him if I had not been rescued. My poor father heard of my danger, and was seized with brain fever. He wandered in search of me, and was at last found by friends, and taken to their house. He was not able to come for me, so he sent, and I was on the road, as I have told you."

Helen had been but imperfectly informed of what had happened, as will be seen.

"In his mind?" asked Mrs. Sloman.

"He is not able to travel yet."

"And out of his mind?"

"I am afraid so. They would not let me know as much as I wanted. But they say he is under good medical care."

Olivia was not sorry to hear he had been delirious. The facts of his abduction, and various matters involving herself, could be made to appear as the phantasy of a diseased brain. She felt immensely relieved. As she turned again to Helen, she saw that she was weeping quietly.

"Come, I will have none of this. You shall stay with me if you like, till your father is strong enough to join you here. In these times it is dangerous for young girls to travel about the country with insufficient escorts. Come, now, let me see you take some breakfast. You will be faint if you do not."

The tray brought in contained a tempting little repast of broiled birds, omelet, warm rolls, and butter, coffee and chocolate. Helen obeyed the hospitable bidding, and ate heartily, while her hostess talked fluently on many different subjects. Then she uncovered a small harp, and asked the girl if she could play on it.

Helen had never received instructions in music, but she was passionately fond of it, and when Olivia played and sang, she listened as if moved to the very soul. She entertained the performer for another and another song; and thanked her with such genuine emotion, that her own latent talent for the art was manifest.

"Now you must excuse me for some hours," said the lady, rising from the instrument. "I have an invalid husband. My maid has been with him all the morning, but she can not fill my place."

The plan of sending Paul Sloman to a seacoast retreat had not yet been put in practice. Olivia conducted her fair guest to her chamber. Helen was weary indeed, and the kindness shown her made her feel almost at home. She was glad to seek repose for a short time before dinner, which she understood would be served at five o'clock.

She slept peacefully, and was awakened by a tap at the door, which she rose to open. A girl a few years older than herself, came to ask if she could assist her in dressing.

Helen asked her to walk in, and expressed the pleasure she had in seeing one who was of her own sex and age, though she wanted no help. She was touched by a certain air of melancholy about the young woman, and by her evident disinclination to conversation. "Perhaps," she thought, "she is far from home and friends like myself."

"Your name is Louise?" she asked at length.

"It is. I am in Mrs. Sloman's service—just at present."

"She spoke of you; she said you were attending on a sick gentleman. Is he likely to die?"

"The girl started. 'I hope not!' she exclaimed. 'Who said he would die?'"

"No one at all. But—you seemed so sad. I thought that might be the cause."

"Oh, no! Mr. Sloman is better. I hope he will recover."

"I hope so too. It would be very hard for his wife if she were to lose him."

"You think so?"

"Certainly. What should I do if I lost my father?" she sighed, deeply.

"You have a father?" asked Louise.

It was plain that she knew nothing of the young stranger's adventures. Helen gave her a short history of all that had happened to herself, pleased with the interest shown in looks rather than in words. She was sure the girl had

suffered in some way, and her heart warmed toward her.

A bell was rung; and Louise hastily left the room to answer the call of her mistress. Not long afterward, the hostess herself appeared, all smiles and affability, and taking the arm of her young guest, led her down to dinner.

There were covers for three; and Helen looked around in hopes that Louise would join them; but she did not appear. The dinner was excellent, and she partook of it with appetite, but refused wine.

Olivia, on the contrary, drank several glasses. When she had sent out the man who waited, she said: "You see, my child, how lonely I have to be while my husband is so ill. It will be a charity if you will stay with me several weeks."

"I can not do that, madam," replied Helen.

"I ought to leave you to-morrow, to go to my father."

"How can you? You do not know the way to his present abode?"

"I would not dare to go alone. But the gentleman who came for me and was taking me to him, will soon find me, and then we must pursue our journey."

"Who is the gentleman?"

"Mr. Walter Ormsley."

Olivia's face darkened. It did not suit her plans that the girl should be under the protection of any of that family. But she controlled the expression of her chagrin.

"Do you know him, madam?" Helen asked.

"I have heard of him. But he is not a proper companion for you on a journey through a wild country. Your father must indeed have had his reason obscured, to send him for you."

"How so?"

Olivia laughed. Helen did not like the sound of her merriment.

"How innocent you are, to be sure! So pretty a girl, traveling alone with a young man—why—my dear—it will make a sad talk! I could not let you go, under such auspices."

"He was very kind," murmured the girl, the tears welling in her eyes.

"Of course; I dare say. More than kind, I should imagine, by that blush, my dear."

The rude remark covered Helen with confusion; and she could not help feeling indignant, too. Her hostess perceived the feeling she had caused, and covered it by rising from the table and leading the way back into the drawing-room. There she pointed to a heap of illustrated volumes on the center-table, with a portfolio of engravings, and bade the girl amuse herself during her absence, promising she should have some music by-and-by.

Helen forgot her vexation in looking over these art treasures. It was long since she had seen any thing like them, and she so dearly loved pictures! She did not notice how time flew, nor heard any noises outside the house.

The attendant brought in a large lamp when daylight failed; and seating herself by the table, the girl continued her examination of the books. When the door opened and some one came in, she supposed it was her hostess, and did not look up.

A tall man, of distinguished appearance, dressed in a gray traveling suit, had entered the room.

He started violently when he saw the girl seated at the table. He stood gazing fixedly at her, his own face blanched, his lips parted, his hands partially upraised, as if wondering and half recoiling at some unexpected apparition.

He gazed, still motionless, till Helen, lifting her eyes, caught sight of him.

She rose instantly from her seat in surprise and trepidation.

The gentleman strode forward, and suddenly seized both her hands, grasping them with a force that terrified her.

"In the name of Heaven, tell me who you are?" he exclaimed, passionately.

There was a wildness in his tone that convinced the girl some madman had broken in upon her. She struggled to release her hands, with a scream of fright.

"Pardon me! Alas! alas! I know not what I am doing!" cried the gentleman, clasping his forehead with both hands. "I crave pardon!"

No one answered him. Helen had fled from the room. She ran up-stairs swiftly and gained her own chamber, where she sunk down, unnerved with terror. What new dangers had she to tremble at?

Olivia entered the drawing-room the minute after the girl had left. She started with surprise at sight of the visitor. But the next instant she had sprung to meet him with eager delight.

"Victor!" she exclaimed, joyously. "I had no thought of seeing you so soon."

"But I am welcome no less, I hope?" he said.

"A thousand times, welcome!"

She looked as if she could have thrown herself into his arms. But he only shook her hands cordially, and asked after Paul, while he drew a chair for her to the fire.

Then he told her of business that had called him back much sooner than he had expected, and of the pleasure he felt in finding her well. He had called first to see her and his good friend Paul, before proceeding on his way to his brother's.

"Now tell me," he concluded, "the name of this young lady—your guest?"

"The young lady—?" Olivia hesitated.

"I saw her here—just now—as I came in. She was sitting at the table. The lamp-light fell full on her face. I was struck—I was paralyzed—I knew not what I was doing! I said something—as I took both her hands in a sudden impulse—that must have frightened her, for she vanished like a vision, just as you came in."

Olivia marked his sudden interest in his face; his deep emotion; and a keen jealousy awoke in the depths of her passionate soul.

"Who is she?" he asked again.

"You seem to have been suddenly captivated," she answered, with a ring of scorn in her voice. "Do you think her so very beautiful?"

"Beautiful?" he echoed. "There was more than beauty! But who is she?"

"Would you give the world to know?"

"I might—I would give ten thousand worlds if it were as I thought at the first glance! But that could not be! I was a fool! I behaved like a fool, to frighten her. Tell me, Olivia, who she is?"

Olivia was more and more offended, but she could not refuse to answer.

"A poor girl, the daughter of a crazed doctor, sent here this morning by a friend who asked shelter for her."

"Certainly." And Olivia glided from the room, but presently returned.

"The young lady has retired to her room, and can not come down this evening."

"I may see her to-morrow, then?"

"To-morrow morning—of course."

She went down the steps and entered the carriage in her own peculiarly independent way, and every eye followed her with admiration.

Truly, Gervaise De Laurian's heart beat proudly as he gazed on her, so radiant, so stylish in her traveling suit of Antwerp silk, and her dainty hat with a Bird of Paradise floating like a ray of sunlight over her dark hair.

"Barbara, have you no word for me? I am sure there need be no further secrecy in this matter. Our friends all know of our engagement; why need you leave me without a parting word?"

Roy spoke a little bitterly. Barbara leaned back among the cushions, her face expressive of her displeasure. Why had he acted so foolishly? What made him speak in such a manner? What reply should she make? Something that would satisfy Roy, and not dissatisfy De Laurian.

Her ready woman's wit came to the rescue. "Surely I need not, Roy. I should think, however, you had studied womankind so thoroughly that you'd know by this time that we never express our private thoughts for the benefit of others."

Roy had full view of her face as she spoke, while no one else had; and, as she concluded, she smiled on him, and kissed the tip of her fingers to him, at the same time making a menacing little gesture toward the rest of the party.

De Laurian had laughed outright when Barbara spoke. "Good for you, Miss Lester. Davenal, you acknowledge yourself worsted by that broadside."

Roy could afford to laugh after that look of Barbara's. "I'll repay you with interest some day." Mr. Chetwynd stepped up to the carriage.

"You have no more time to spare, Barbara; Oliver will have to drive fast to catch the Newburg express at Paterson. Take care of yourself, and write soon."

With a beaming smile, Barbara nodded them adieu, and, as the carriage turned a curve, she waved her handkerchief toward them.

With a sigh, Mrs. Chetwynd turned to re-enter the house: had she known all that would occur before she again looked on willful, beautiful Barbara, the sigh would have been a shriek.

"Such an idea! and yet, in its impulsiveness so like poor Barbara herself." Mrs. Chetwynd remarked it to De Laurian as they entered the house.

"I think it very likely she will return as suddenly as she left. You will miss her very much, doubtless."

"Indeed we will; she seems as near and dear to me as though she were one of my own blood."

De Laurian started, with an exclamation of surprise. "Is she not a relative? I always supposed her a cousin at least."

"Oh, no; there does not exist the slightest tie of relationship. She was a sort of waif, who was left to our kindness when only a babe of very tender age. She and Blanche were just of a size and age then, although Barbara has grown the taller since."

De Laurian listened with eager interest. "And you have not the remotest idea who or what she is? There was no clue to her parentage?"

"Yes, a slight one, that only seemed to heighten our interest in her. It is a broken chain, of Florentine gold, joined by an oval stone, that is severed in the middle. On the under side of this jewel is half a letter 'D' and a complete one joining, thus."

She drew with her pencil on a card two letter D's, lapped and joined.

"We suppose the missing half of the stone to correspond with the half I have; thus making, when complete, three D's, that doubtless represent her parents, initials, which to us suggest the terrible 'curse'—Disunion, Desertion, Death, which my poor Blanche seems to inherit as her fatal birthright."

A dense shadow darkened Mrs. Chetwynd's face, but she strove to throw it off. "We named her 'Barbara Lester' because on her little robe that name was written."

De Laurian was listening with intensest animation to this story of his wife's early life.

"Blanche, bring the necklace for Mr. De Laurian to see; it is of rare workmanship."

As Blanche obeyed, Roy Davenal joined Mr. and Mrs. Chetwynd.

"Now that Barbara has gone, sir, I candidly admit the charm at Chetwynd Chase is broken. I came from the West purposely to see her, and in consequence of her sudden flitting, have not accomplished my object."

"Mr. Chetwynd, it must be useless for me to say I love Barbara. I have loved her for years. I desire to make her my wife. Can it be so?"

He looked every inch the noble lover as he stood there and proudly asked this favor at the hands of the courtly old gentleman.

"As you say, Mr. Davenal, it seems almost superfluous to tell us this, so patent has it been for so long a time. I will not stand in your way, believing you to be a man well worthy the hand of my foster-child. She will give you her answer, and, whatever it is, I will ratify it."

Roy bowed; he had not much fear of Barbara's withholding her consent.

"Then at Christmas, if she has returned, I may claim her?"

"So far as I am concerned, most certainly." Roy's face grew luminous with the great happiness, and he warmly grasped Mr. Chetwynd's hand, and offered his thanks, and in turn received both his and Mrs. Chetwynd's congratulations.

Then he went across the room to De Laurian, who, his head leaning carelessly against the window, had heard, with secret triumph, the arrangements to give his wife's hand to this lover.

"You will offer me joy? and a long life to love and cherish her, De Laurian?"

"Most heartily I wish you all you will wish me and my bride. Allow me to announce the future Mrs. Gervaise De Laurian."

Blanche had at that moment entered with the chain.

Roy took her hand and touched it to his lips.

"Accept my most fervent congratulations, Blanche. And, as your present is bright and sunny, may your future be fairer and more radiant. De Laurian, you're a fortunate fellow."

"As well as yourself, sir."

They shook hands warmly, and then Mrs. Chetwynd touched Davenal on the shoulder.

"When you write to Barbara, Mr. Davenal, please do not intimate the engagement between Blanche and Mr. De Laurian. You'll remember? It will be a most delightful surprise when she returns to her own wedding to find there will be another."

"I will not mention it. And now, my friends, permit me to wish you good-by. With your permission, Mr. Chetwynd, I will take one of your horses, to be sent directly home."

"There is no need of that, Mr. Davenal. One of the men can ride over after you and bring back Fire-fly—you'd better take Fire-fly."

"I may possibly catch the train Barbara took—I will try for it, at least."

He bade them good-by, gave a hasty order

for his trunk to be expressed through to St. Louis, and galloped away, followed by De Laurian's dark eyes, that combined a mingled look of mocking triumph and derisive pity.

"This is Barbara's chain, Mr. De Laurian," Mrs. Chetwynd handed him the necklace; he took it to the window to examine it.

"What does Barbara herself think of it?" he asked.

"She does not say; I know she would like to keep it in her own possession, but I think it should remain in my keeping."

"Undoubtedly; and you may one day discover she is a duchess in disguise."

Blanche wondered at the fire in her lover's eyes as he critically surveyed the toy.

A sudden resolve had entered De Laurian's brain, and, as usual, he acted immediately in accordance with it. This chain was a link that bore the necklace a stolen bauble, or really the remnant of former riches on her parents' part? At all events, it must be his; it should be his.

With a sudden start of alarm, he sprang from the window.

"Mr. Chetwynd—Madame! what have I, in my awkwardness, done? I have dropped the chain outside."

He hastened to the door, and to the lawn, where, under the window, was an iron grating opening into the underground reservoir, from whence came the water in the fountain.

In consternation Mrs. Chetwynd followed him.

"What can I do to replace it? Any thing you can suggest shall be done."

De Laurian's face was troubled and anxious as he peered through the grating, then at the faces of Mrs. Chetwynd and her husband.

"Do not be so grieved. Accidents can not always be avoided."

Her ladylike manner assured him he was pardoned for his carelessness, and they went back to the drawing-room, while De Laurian, bidding them adieu, returned home. Out of sight of Chetwynd Chase, he checked the speed of his horse, and with a smile no language can describe, drew from his coat-sleeve the broken chain of Florentine gold!

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 158.)

Rocky Mountain Rob, THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW; OR, The Vigilantes of Humboldt Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF THE "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT,"
"RED MAZEPA," "ACR OF SPADERS," "HEART
OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK,"
"A STRANGE GIRL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.
GET-UP GULCH'S CANDIDATE.

THE colonel looked rather astonished at Turner's speech.

"I don't exactly understand Jim," he said.

"Squar as a die, kumel," Turner exclaimed, emphatically. "Hain't you heard of that air awful fair last night up to Chinese Camp?"

The colonel nodded.

"Wal, now, kumel, we've got fur to go fur them cusses or civilization 'round hyer is played out. Ef they had only robbed the 'Johns' of their dust, it wouldn't have been so bad, but when they come to roasting 'em in a fire by inches, it's too much for decent white men to stand."

"I low that I don't keer much for the heathen, anyway, and I jest went fur to bust that monte bank all I knew how, but this hyer billin' last night is too much. It's got to be stopped, kumel, or whar is the safety of the community? Thar's been a right smart lot of talk 'bout risin' a Vigilance Committee and purifyin' things 'round hyer, an' we free and enlighten citizens of Get-up Gulch hev sot in council together an' agreed a general show of hands, we low that kumel you're the man to take the pile of you keer to straddle the blind."

Get-up Gulch puts up her dust on you, every time, kumel."

"Well, I'm very much obliged to my fellow-citizens of the Gulch for the confidence that they have in me, but a Vigilance Committee to be effective must include all the leading citizens; and in this case, the Gulch, the Bar and Poor-shoot City ought to all go in together," the colonel said.

"That's jest what we're arter, kumel," exclaimed Jim. "This hyer fair last night has riled things like blazes. It ain't two or three on us that talks of a committee; it's the hull community. Get-up Gulch has got her back up. Now, kumel, you know the fact is the Bar has captured 'bout all she wanted; she's got the post-office, the express-office, and when we come to the Vigilantes, she'll go in fur to put up Judge Lynch herself, and I'll low that we citizens of the Gulch ain't a-goin' to let the Bar take every thing."

"We want a fair shake in this hyer shindig. Now, you're jest as much a citizen of the Gulch as you air of the Bar, seeing that you're President of the Get-up Gulch Gold Mining Company. And as you stop at the Waterproof saloon in the Bar, they can't in common decency go back on you. And now the pint is jest hyer. Get-up Gulch is fur you, kumel, tooth and nail. Will you run of we nominate yer?"

"Well, Jim, if the citizens of the Gulch see fit to put me up for Judge Lynch, in case the Vigilance Committee is organized, I have too high a respect for their judgment to refuse to act," the colonel said.

"Hooray!" Turner got up, swung his hat, and gave a single cheer.

The colonel bowed.

"It's all right, kumel; you're the man for the position. Get-up Gulch backs you, every time, and 'tween you and me and the bedpost, kumel," and here Turner lowered his voice and approached the colonel confidentially, "we've sent out a skirmisher fur to sound the sharps over to Poor-shoot City; ef the city goes fur you we kin run you in fur sure. I reckon, kumel, you ought fur to be a pretty poplar man with the boys over thar."

"Yes, I ought to be; I am also President of the Poor-shoot City Gulch Mining Company, you know."

"Sartin! Oh, we kin run you in, kumel. I heard some of the sharps up at the Bar—I was over thar this mornin'—low that old Pop Shook would make a good judge; now, kumel, I ain't the man to say a word agin' Old Pop when compounding a cocktail is concerned, and I stand ready to back him agin' any four men in the hull of Montana for preachin' a real dig-your-soul-up-by-the-roots discourse on Sunday. He's got true religion, the old bald-headed cuss has; and when it comes to mixing liquors to suit a gentleman's mouth, why, the old red-headed galoot kin stand on one leg and flax the hull on 'em. I don't go back on the old man any time, but he's no more fit to be Judge Lynch than I am to run a first-class prayer-meetin'; that's honest now, kumel."

The colonel was obliged to admit that he thought that Shook was not equal to the office.

"But, kumel, you're the man to run the machine!" Turner cried, in admiration. "I don't want to flatter you a mite, you know; I don't run any shaft in that mine; but when we put a

man up fur to hold life and death in his hands, we want him to be squar' and correct. Kumel, you've seen fier, fightin' for your country; and I take it that, ef it come to going fur these cusses and a-wiping 'em off the face of the yearth, you know when and how to go fur 'em in reg'lar style; and I jest tell you, kumel, Get-up Gulch is with you every time."

The colonel again bowed his acknowledgment of Turner's compliments.

"Much obliged, kumel," Turner added, backing to the door of the shanty; "the boys kinder wanted me to come and see how the keards were running afore they 'chipped' in; but, seen' as every thing is correct, fur the last time, kumel, I repeat, Get-up Gulch puts up her dust on you, and she'll break the bank for you or bust."

Then Mr. Turner withdrew and proceeded to "carry the news to Mary" that the "kumel" had consented to "stand" to the "boys" assembled in solemn convocation at the Nip-and-tuck Hotel, which was the principal saloon of Get-up Gulch City.

And while the interview was taking place between the colonel and the representative of the mining town, another scene was in progress in the bar-room of the Waterproof Hotel at the Bar.

Just about half-past twelve, Jim York had walked into the saloon and asked for a glass of whisky. It being the dinner-hour the saloon was deserted, Shook alone being present attending to the bar.

The old man looked at York for a moment, but made no motion toward serving him.

"Will you oblige me with a glass of whisky?" York asked, a frown upon his dark face; and, as he spoke, he took a silver dollar from his pocket and laid it on the counter.

Shook quietly pushed the dollar back to York.

"What do you mean?" York demanded, in astonishment, and the visible signs of rage beginning to appear on his face.

"Your money ain't good hyer," Shook said, quietly.

"What do you mean by that?" York exclaimed, hastily.

"I mean jest what I say," replied the old man, firmly; "and I say it over agin so that you kin understand me. I say that your money ain't good at this hyer bar."

"Do you think the piece is bad?" York exclaimed; "if you do, here's a half-dozen more; pick out one to suit you," and as he spoke he rattled the dollars down on the counter.

"I don't say that your money's bad," Shook replied, getting red in the face; "but I do say that it ain't good hyer, and you'll greatly oblige me ef you'll walk out of that door and never come inside of it agin. Now, that's good plain English, Mr. York."

"Yes, very plain," York said, with a scornful laugh. "I s'pose a man may ask an explanation of such treatment, mayn't he?"

"I hain't got any time to talk to you!" Shook exclaimed, shortly, turning away.

By Satan, you shall give me an explanation," York cried, and he brought his clenched fist down upon the counter with a violence that made the bar shake.

"Look a-here! I don't want any loud talk hyer!" Shook cried, very red in the face, and he thrust his hand under the counter as if to grasp a weapon.

York looked at him with a scornful smile.

"Oh, you needn't try that game on!" he exclaimed. "It ain't come to shootin'-irons between us yet. You've insulted me, and you're no more afraid of me than I am of you."

The old man looked for a moment into the threatening eyes of York, and came instantly to the conclusion that he had better get rid of him peacefully.

"Now, see hyer, York," he said, half in entreaty, "I don't want to have any trouble with you, but I don't want you to come round hyer any more. You know what the reason is as well as I do. My gal ain't fur you."

"Not for me, eh?" and there was a peculiar smile upon York's face. Shook was not an adept at reading rough men's faces; if he had been, that quiet smile would have troubled him.

"No, and you might as well know it, just as last, and as a friend, I'll jest give you a word of advice: jest you git out while you kin; things are workin', and thar'll be a hurricane 'round hyer fust thing you know. And when the hurricane comes, then folks what plays keards for a living had better be emigratin'."

York smiled sarcastically; it was not the first time he had heard of a vigilance committee; but, grown bold by impunity, he laughed at the idea. He had heard the cry of "wolf" too often.

"When the Vigilantes tackle me, maybe they'll have their hands full," York said, significantly.

"I only g'n you fair warning, that's all," Shook replied.

"Then I'm to understand that my presence is not desired in the Waterproof saloon?"

"When I've got any thing to say to a man, I generally spit it right out," Shook's eyes snapped.

"I'm much obliged, old man, for your warning as to the Vigilantes, and as for the other matter, I'll never darken your door agin," then York picked up his money and walked out into the street.

CHAPTER XXXII.
YORK AND BESSIE.

"Not for me!" York repeated, slowly, to himself, as he stood before the door of the saloon. "I'll bet you two to one, Old Shook, that you lie," he continued, an ugly smile upon his face. Then he glanced up and down the street thoughtfully. If I wonder if there was any truth in the old man's words about the Vigilantes, or was it only a trick to scare me out of town? Out of sight, out of mind, the old adage says, and the sharp that made it knew woman devilish well; ay, and man, too, for that matter. The old man thinks that if I go away the girl will forget me. Maybe he's right, but I won't give her the chance to rob me out of her memory so easily just yet. She's mine if I choose to take her, and who's to hinder me, I'd like to know? And York looked around him, defiantly. Then he walked slowly up to the corner of the shanty. As he did so, his eyes fell upon a little group of miners on the other side of the street in front of the "Let-her-rip saloon," and in the middle of the group was a Chinaman, minus the pig-tail, evidently relating the story of the destruction of the Chinese Camp.

York watched the little group for a moment, a dark and angry look upon his face.

"That affair of last night has raised a bigger breeze than I anticipated. The cursed fools! What do they want to trouble themselves about the 'Johns' for? They ought to be all driven out of the country by rights. I'm afraid that there is going to be trouble, after all."

York remained for a few minutes motionless, in deep thought. He was thinking of some way to gain an interview with Bessie.

"I'll take her with me if she'll go," he muttered, between his teeth, "even if I have to fight every inch of the way!"

Then the thought suddenly came to him of how he could secure an interview.

Right back of the house was the shanty,

which served for a stable; in the rear of the stable was a chicken-coop and yard, and York remembered that he had often seen Bessie after dinner carry the crumbs and scraps out to the fowls.

"The plan was simple enough. All he had to do was to lay in the stable till the girl should come."

With York to think was to act, and so he proceeded at once to the stable. His mind fully occupied by thoughts of the girl, he did not notice that, as he turned the corner of the saloon and disappeared behind it, two of the group on the other side of the street detached themselves from the rest and crossed the street, apparently watching him.

The stable, which was nothing but an open shed, stood with its side to the house, so that any one within was fully concealed from all observation from the windows of the hotel.

York had not been twenty minutes in the stable when Bessie entered with a plate full of scraps for the chickens. She started in alarm when she saw York, and the plate dropped to the ground.

York stepped forward at once, grasped her by the wrist, and drew her within the shed fairly out of sight.

"Hush, Bessie," he cried; "don't make a noise. I want to speak to you for a few minutes."

"Oh, Jim, let me go," she said, evidently very much alarmed; but York kept a firm hold upon her wrist.

"Why, Bessie, are you afraid of me?" he exclaimed, reproachfully.

"No, Jim, but—" and then she paused.

"But what?"

"If father should come."

"Well, what of it, even if he should come?"

"Why, he would be very angry, Jim."

"Yes, I suppose so." York's lip curled, contemptuously. "He has just informed me that he prefers I should not enter his door again."

And as he spoke he watched the girl's face closely. What he saw there did not appear to please him, for an angry glare came into his eyes.

"And so, Bessie, this I suppose must be our last meeting, and he placed his arm round the girl's waist and drew her up close to him. He could feel that she was trembling in every limb. Bitter curses were on his tongue, but, with a great effort, he forced them back, and strove to keep his temper."

"Yes, our last meeting," the girl replied, mechanically.

"And you are willing that it should be so?" he asked, with ill-disguised contempt.

"Look-a-hyer! well, jest, take a hand in this hyer game, an' we want a fresh deal all round the board. Jest you let him up. I'm on the shoot now, I jest tell you."

"Oh, you are on the shoot, eh, Mr. Kangaroo Denton?" Talbot said, in his quiet way, and the revolver which he had taken from York he thrust into his belt. The manner of Injun Dick was extremely pleasant, his face calm and placid, yet there was a peculiar look about the eyes which belied the smile.

"Wal, that's my name, an' I don't go back on it," Denton said, boisterously; but it was plain that he was annoyed at being recognized.

"Do you wish to assist your friend over yonder?" Dick asked, smiling in such a manner that it irritated the gentle Denton most terribly.

"Wal, I do, an' I'm goin' to, too, now; you kin bet all your gold-dust on it!" Denton exclaimed. He really began to believe that he had succeeded in backing Dick down, but the quiet, supercilious smile annoyed him.

"Pass right on, sir, and assist him," Dick said, with extreme politeness, stepping to one side that the other might pass.

Denton hesitated for a moment; he was trying to think of some biting remark to hurl at his cool antagonist, but he was not quick-witted, and had to content himself with a muttered growl; then he advanced to the aid of York, over whose features a threatening expression had come that boded no good to his foe, Injun Dick.

Three steps Kangaroo took; three swaggering steps that told more plainly than words how great he felt he was about to be, and then—

A smothered cry from York; a long breath of wonder from the bystanders, and Mr. Denton felt a sensation under his right ear as if a stray mule had got into the stable and kicked him. Over he went into the arms of the Indian, and, in a second, Kangaroo, bound hand and foot, was lying by the side of York. The blow, delivered straight as a die and with the quickness of the panther's spring by Dick's powerful arm, had knocked the bully completely out of time, and it was full five minutes before he recovered his senses.

A spontaneous burst of admiration came from the lips of the crowd. As one of the throng afterward remarked, it "was the puttiest, cleanest lick he ever seed' struck in Montana!"

And then, the sentiment of surprise over, the crowd surged forward a step or so as if with intent to take a hand in the game; but, in his easy, quiet way, Dick waved them back with one hand, while he drew a revolver from his belt and cocked it with the other.

"Hold on, gentlemen!" he cried; "this is my funeral. In running this grave-yard. This long-legged fellow here talked about two on one a minute ago and appealed to you for fair play. It didn't take two to lay him out. This isn't any common affair, gentlemen. I don't want to boast, but I think that any one of you, after what you have seen, would be perfectly willing to take your oath that I didn't want any backer in this fight if I had wished to kill either of these men."

"That's so!" cried one of the crowd, emphatically.

"Go-rect!" exclaimed a second.

Dick had made the impression that a cool and determined man usually produces upon a crowd.

"What's the matter, anyway?" inquired Shook, whose curiosity had gotten the better of his anger.

And the crowd re-echoed the old man's words.

"These men are guilty of both robbery and murder," replied Dick, quietly.

A hum of astonishment rose from the crowd, and with open mouths they looked at each other.

"Th these men are members of Rocky Mountain Rob's road-agents," Talbot continued.

"You lie!" cried York, fiercely, but his face was deathly pale.

The crowd were thoroughly astonished at the charge.

"Is that so?" exclaimed Shook, in wonder; and Bessie, taking advantage of the confusion amid the crowd, slipped from the stable and ran, with the swiftness of a fawn, into the house.

York alone noticed her departure, and a bitter curse came from his lips. Oh, how he prayed for a giant's strength to burst the bonds which confined him, that he might spring upon his foe, and, with a single grasp, choke the very life from that sinewy frame he so cordially hated!

"It's a cursed lie, I tell you!" exclaimed

York, writhing in the keen agonies of impotent rage, and grinding his teeth like a maddened hyena.

"I'll give you a chance to prove that before you're a day older," Talbot replied, with provoking coolness.

"You're all a set of cowards!" York cried, hot with rage. "Give me back my liberty and my arms, and I'll fight you, one and all—I will, by Heaven!"

"I ain't any use 'busing' us," one of the miners remarked, tartly. "We ain't lifted a finger ag'in 'em. We don't know 'xactly how it was with you, seein' as how the sponger had bin throwed up for afore we come, but, as fur your friend that, he were licked in fair fight."

"He struck him unawares!" York cried. "The galoot ought to be kept his eyes peeled after he's killed in," another miner remarked, tersely.

"This man lies when he says that I am one of the 'spongers'!" York exclaimed. "Is he going to be my judge?"

"No s'ice!" cried Shook, emphatically. "Give me a fair show, that's all I ask," York said, striving to appear calm. "Who'll try me, then?"

"Judge Lynch, old man!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 153.)

Cat and Tiger:

OR,
THE STAR OF DIAMONDS.

A ROMANCE OF LOVE AND MYSTERY.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED CORON," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "HEROULES," "THE HUNCHBACK," "PLUMING TALESMAN," "BLACK CROOKER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.—CONTINUED.

"Cortez Mendoza, I am Dwyer Allison—" "So I thought—devil's voice!"

"I ought to take your life!"

"Take it, then!"

"You are not fit to die, with the blood of Carline Mandoro on your hands."

"Maledictions on Carline Mandoro!" spat Cortez, venting the words in a strangled breath.

"I did not harm Carline Mandoro, and I can prove it!"

"No, you can not prove that. Perhaps, too, you will prove that you did not kill Wart Gomez?"

"I tell you I can!"

"You lie, Cortez Mendoza!"

"Caramba!" squirming and writhing desperately.

"You did kill Wart Gomez; you did stab Carline Mandoro."

"No—I did not! Wart Gomez died by the hand of Sanzo Romero; and it was he who stabbed Carline Mandoro. I am an innocent man!"

"Who is Sanzo Romero?"

"That is no business of yours!"

"This is a trick by which you hope to save your life."

"Caramba! Devil take my life! I am an innocent man. Shoot off that pistol, and you will be a murderer! I will point you out to Satan, when you come to the next world! Ho! ho! ho!" and he laughed—a half-choked, wild and savage laugh.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MISTRESS AND MAID.

It was the day after the night marked by our recent chapters of narrative and explanation.

The hour was five, p. m.

Helene Cerey, in her boudoir, was sitting at a writing-table, idly twirling a penholder between her fingers and gazing absently down at the rich carpeting—not absently, either, for the lustrous eyes anon shone forth from their brilliant depths, a glance that was full of strangely-guided thought.

She had slept well the night gone, when Eloise had watched by her couch; she looked as fresh and beautiful as ever—only, there was a peculiar seriousness in the expression of her face, one indicative of unusual reflection, and inward musing.

"The girl," she uttered at last, in a low, meditative way, "may be just the one, the thing, the convenience I want, to rid myself of that villainous Cortez Mendoza. That she is his half-sister, I am convinced by what I learned from Jacques and Nio of their girl accomplice, Rosella—and Eloise must be this Rosella; by her own story of crossing the ocean with Carlos Mendoza—it must have been no other than Mendoza—and her subsequent escape from the Orphan Girls' Asylum, where the Quack placed her! I may, in some way, use her relationship to my interests. Or, if not that, then I must use her in some way, and force her to obey me by my knowledge of her past life. It is strange how familiar her face is to me whenever I look at her closely. I am sure I never saw her until she entered my service, six months ago; and yet there is something—a glance that sometimes darts from her gray eyes—which reminds me of the dead Florese—death! I must not think of my dead rival again! I am foolish; I am sure that I know pretty much the history of this Eloise Cyley. The plot, now! How shall I manage it?"

She drummed on the table with the penholder, and stared harder at the carpet, as she taxed her fertile brain for a feasible means by which to use Eloise in ridding herself of Cortez Mendoza; for, that Cortez Mendoza was half-brother to the maid, she felt assured by answers to questions she had shrewdly put to the latter during the forenoon, and which corroborated suspicions of hers, sprung of certain information which she had incidentally gained of Nio, one of the ruffians we have seen in her employ in New Orleans.

And she must have partially arrived at a determination, for the knitting of the delicate brows gradually relaxed, and the expression of her features assumed an easier outline.

While she was thus occupied, Eloise came into the room.

"Well, have you done as I instructed you?" the beauty asked, while Eloise lighted the lamp her mistress was accustomed to burn, instead of gas, in that room.

"Yes, madame," replied the maid.

"And there is another thing, Eloise—what about my servants?"

"They are all gone. They left within two hours after madame discharged them; and one said—"

"Ah! one said? What did one say?"

"One said—'It was Leo, the cook—that she had heard strange noises last night.'"

"Ha! And did she say anything, Eloise, think you?"

"I can not answer as to that, madame."

"This Leo, the cook, may or may not have seen anything, for all you know?"

"Yes, madame."

"Well, and was there any other remark by these apish, gossiping servants?"

"None that I heard, madame. But every one of them seemed glad to depart."

"And I am glad they have gone!" exclaimed Helene, worriedly. "But I hope they, or any of them, have not seen this Green Shadow."

Then, after a long pause:

"Eloise—I was questioning you this morning."

"Yes," returned the maid, adding, closely: "Does madame want me for any thing else at present? I would like—"

"I wish to speak again on the subject of our conversation this morning," interrupted the beauty.

"Madame is interested in me. I am grateful."

"I have not forgotten a single item of what you told me. And I have much to add."

"Madame forgets," she said, she would explore the hole in the cellar wall to-day. I shall we not do it now?"

Evidently she disliked to have her mistress revive the subject of their morning's conversation, else she would not have made the suggestion she did; for we know that—to all appearances—Eloise was strongly adverse to exploring the hole in the cellar and counting the danger which might be lurking beyond it.

"Never mind that, just now; there are other matters more pressing, to which I must attend. Listen to me, now."

"Yes, madame," uneasily.

"I am going away from Philadelphia."

"Going away?"

"Yes. Instead of trying to find out who or what this Shadow is, that has haunted me for fifteen years, I have fixed upon another plan: I will try to escape it."

"Yes, madame," said Eloise, unmeaningly. "At the same time, and in the same means, I will make an effort to escape this villainous Spaniard, who is my deadly enemy, and who, also, it seems, has been tracking me for fifteen years. You remember, Eloise, when you and I were riding in Fairmount Park, some months ago, I called your attention to a man who stared at us from a passing carriage, and who was out of sight before I could recognize him? It was Cortez Mendoza, the man who came here last night. He must have followed me from the Park, and ascertained, in that way, where I lived. He is my enemy; he has been hunting me for fifteen years; he has found me. I must get rid of him, and you are to aid me."

"I, madame?"

"How is it possible?"

"I will tell you. Mark well all I shall say. You mailed a note for me awhile ago, addressed to Cortez Mendoza, through the general delivery of the post-office."

"Yes."

"He may get that note, or he may not. I think it more than likely he will. It contains an invitation to call on me, any evening within twelve days from date. When he comes, as I know he will, he must sit in that chair—that one—there, with the high back against the wall. Seat yourself in it, Eloise."

Eloise obeyed half-hesitatingly.

When she was seated, Helene went up to her, and touched a tiny knob—which was a spring—at the top of the high back.

Instantly, the arms of the chair crossed each other, and pressed tightly down on the limbs of the one who sat there. From the back there shot around a thin band of iron, which glided over her bosom, imprisoning her arms at the same time; and, from underneath the chair, two cirelets of iron clasped, with a double click, around her ankles.

It was an ingenious contrivance, a combination of machinery and springs that worked with terrible efficiency.

Taken so suddenly by surprise, and perceiving how utterly helpless she was, Eloise felt alarmed.

"Madame!" she screamed, in affright. "Fear nothing," said Helene. "I only meant to show how easily Cortez Mendoza could be got rid of. There—you are free again."

By turning a small crank that was concealed behind the chair, Helene readjusted the mischievous apparatus, saying, while doing it: "That chair was made for me, many years ago, by two old slaves of mine, named Jacques and Nio."

"Jacques and Nio?" came like a startled echo from the maid's lips; and she trembled visibly.

"I am not mistaken," thought Helene, who had purposely uttered the two names with a peculiar emphasis, and then watched keenly to note the effect upon Eloise. I am not mistaken. Eloise Cyley and Rosella, the 'thieves' pride,' are identical. See how quickly she recognized those names!—the names of the men I employed, fifteen years ago, in New Orleans."

Then aloud:

"Why did you start, Eloise? Did you—?"

"I thought I saw a face among the plants on the balcony, madame," replied Eloise, interrupting, and nervously pointing toward the window which opened on a small balcony where there were a number of plants and flowers.

"But, why did you repeat those names—'Jacques and Nio'?"

"Indeed, I scarce know. I heard you utter them, madame; and, at the moment, I was so frightened, the exclamation must have burst involuntarily from my lips."

"She lies admirably!" was Helene's mental comment on this prompt excuse; and aloud, she said:

"Now, Eloise, when Cortez Mendoza comes, he must sit in that chair—you saw how I used it? But, I will not be here. I am going away this very night."

Eloise listened.

"I will leave you in charge of the house. Every night, without fail, you must be dressed in the same clothes I wore last night when Cortez Mendoza was here."

"Yes, madame."

"You must also wear a mask—a wire mask."

"A mask, madame?"

"Yes. I have noticed that, in figure and voice, you are very like me—your hair, too, is long and black, like mine. Do you not see?—you are to assume the character of Helene Cerey. Behind the mask, which you will insist on retaining, you will not be known otherwise. You will receive Cortez Mendoza. When he comes, you will invite him up here. You will tell him that you have concluded to yield to his demand to become his wife."

"His wife?"

"Pah! you will tell him that to deceive him. Tell him that you wish to converse upon matters relative to the marriage. Persuade him up here. Seat him in that chair. Then make him captive, as I did you a moment ago."

"And then?" asked Eloise, pausing.

"Then you will set fire to the house."

"Set fire to the house?"

"Yes."

"But, madame—"

"Have the lamp ready, like it burns now, on the table. Upset it on the bed and floor. Throw a blanket round his head, so that his cries may not be heard. Lock the door securely—and flee for your life. I will meet you in St. Louis. I want to retain you in my service."

As this revolting plot for the destruction of Cortez Mendoza burst from the lips of the beautiful woman, a deep color suffused her cheeks, she spoke excitedly, her eyes flashed and glittered. While she unfolded the plan with such

vividness, she could fancy she saw her hated enemy imprisoned fast by the contrivance of the chair, writhing in the smoke and heat closing around him. A picture of his miseries arose in her imagination; she could almost hear his fierce oaths and desperate, agonizing cries.

And she had determined that Eloise should carry out this diabolical scheme.

"Madame!" exclaimed the amazed Eloise, in an accent of horror.

"Do you understand me?" interrogated the beauty.

"Madame! But—"

"Well?—but? But what?"

"I can not—not perpetrate so fiendish a deed."

"Oh, you can not? But you shall! Do you hear me, Eloise?—I say you shall!"

"She is certainly crazed!" resolved Eloise, inwardly, and shuddering imperceptibly at the strange sound of her mistress's voice.

"I say you shall aid me. Let me show you how I can compel you—"

"Compel me, madame?" with a singular firmness.

"Ah!" passed through Helene's brain, "there is that same look in the gray eyes!—the very glance I have seen Florese Barncliffe dart—pah! what foolishness!" And to Eloise:

"Ay, compel you. Hark, now, Eloise Cyley: I know you well."

"Can it be that she has discovered me?" exclaimed Eloise, within herself, in a slight trepidation.

She stepped back before the frowning face that approached her. For Helene misunderstood that trepidation as a guilty tremor.

"You are a culprit this moment!"

"Madame!"

"You were once under arrest for being concerned in the robbery of the house of Elser Barncliffe, in the city of New Orleans. Ha!—you are turning wretch!"

Eloise had paled at mention of the name of Elser Barncliffe.

"You escaped the summary punishment you merited through lack of sufficient evidence. You were known then as 'Rosella'—you were associated with a number of thieves, who called you their 'pride.' After you were released by the authorities, it was supposed that you committed suicide, for a body, with features resembling yours, was found floating, dead, near foot of Canal street. You were then fair, with light hair—and I not right? You have since browned your face with some very delicate dye, and made your hair black, by the same means. Of course you were never heard of after the finding of the body. But, you were far from being dead—the body of the drowned girl was not that of 'Rosella.' I had in my employ two ruffians, named Jacques and Nio. They told me all about you, Rosella: said you were brought over from England by Carlos Mendoza, the Quack, and placed in the Orphan Girls' Asylum; that you ran away from this place, and joined a gang of thieves, under the name of Rosella. Jacques and Nio were your accomplices in robbing the house of Elser Barncliffe." (Eloise grew pale again at mention of Elser Barncliffe) "on which occasion one of the servants was killed in giving the alarm. They know you well. They can identify you in connection with the burglary and the killing of the servant. I know that Jacques and Nio are still living, and I can easily find them. Now, what if I seek them out, and say: 'Look—here is Rosella, not dead, after all! I want to use her for a purpose, and she is obstinate. I will give you five thousand dollars apiece if you will turn State's evidence against her! What then, eh? They will do as I desire—I know it, because—I may tell you—I have bribed them, for a much smaller sum, to kill people for me! You will be sent to prison! And thus I will serve you, Eloise Cyley, if you refuse to perform the task I am about to give you! Cortez Mendoza must be destroyed. You must destroy him!"

"Madame!"

"Not a word!—unless to agree to what I propose."

"Oh, madame! you have ruined me!" cried Eloise.

"Not yet; but I will, if you refuse to obey me."

"No, no; you have done it already!"

"I say I have not—but promise you that I will!"

"But, madame, you have done it now! Oh, Heaven!"

Eloise had bowed her face to her hands, and seemed greatly excited and terrified.

"What do you mean by saying that I have already ruined you?"

"Madame!—there has been a listener to all you have said!"

"A listener?—no! Impossible!" and Helene glanced quickly around, half-expecting to discover some one standing near them.

The room was growing dark. The sun had sunk; and queer shadows were forming about the two, aided by the low, weird flame of the lamp, as they stood there, *en tableau*.

"You are mistaken, Eloise."

"No, madame, I am not. I saw a face at that window, there—on the balcony."

"Ha!"

Helene wheeled about, with the intention of hastening to the small balcony, to see if her maid was right.

But she paused short.

A startling sound fell upon her ears.

They could hear a heavy, rapid footstep ascending the stairs—soon it was in the hallway.

In a moment the door was burst open, with a quivering bang, and Cortez Mendoza bounded into the room.

He was bareheaded, he stared wildly. In each hand he carried a cocked pistol; his hair was on end in dishevelment; his face was pale, haggard, ferocious; and, as he broke thus suddenly and unexpectedly upon them, he half-cried, half-whispered:

"Caramba! Malediction! The devil!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SHADOW UNMASKS.

We return to Cortez Mendoza, who panted and writhed beneath his unseen captor, in the cellar of the house adjoining the residence of Helene Cerey.

"Spaniard!" said this invisible foe, "you tempt me to kill you!"

"Kill away, then!"

"No, I have another punishment in store for you. Look!"

As the unseen spoke, the cellar was lighted up brilliantly.

Zetta came upon the scene, carrying a large lamp, whose broad, flaring flame discovered the tableau in progress.

Behind Zetta was another female—a figure, garbed from head to foot in green, and whose glittering eyes flashed from their faceless surface on the bewildered Spaniard.

Cortez Mendoza stared in astonishment. The man who held him pinioned down to the earth was a negro; and this negro was Gael, whom we have seen before in the earlier part of our story.

Perplexed and amazed, Cortez stared first at the ebony countenance that lowered above him—then turned his head, and gazed with his teeth, as he looked upon the thing which was, beyond doubt, the Green Shadow, whose objective, yet

invisible presence had been an incubus to his mind for fifteen years.

"Malediction!" he exclaimed, his eyes widening in their riveted gaze.

"You see, Cortez Mendoza, you are in a trap."

"Oh, yes!—I see!" he howled, gratingly.

"You are all my enemies! You have me trapped securely! Next thing, I shall be torn in shreds by— Ha! Caramba! Keep off, you shape of the devil!" the last as the enigmatical Shadow advanced quickly, and knelt beside him, fixing those strange, dark, piercing eyes full on his face.

There was something about the figure, about the suddenness of its motions, that made him shudder and recoil, despite his strong nerves and defiant nature.

"Cortez Mendoza," said the Shadow, in a rustling, whispering, menacing voice, "we have caught you at last! We shall mete out that retribution you deserve—not for the murder of Carline Mandoro, but for the murder of Wart Gomez!"

"Malediction! Then I shall suffer for a crime which I never committed."

"You are a villain and liar!"

Cortez only scowled, clenching his jaws fiercely as he met the penetrating look of the faceless thing.

"Hush!" said Zetta, raising one hand, warningly. "I hear footsteps. Some one is approaching the cellar of the next house. This light will be seen through the hole."

"Cortez Mendoza," Gael hissed, tightening his hold on the throat of the captive, and pressing the cold muzzle of the weapon closer, "will you die, or will you live? We want you to get up and come with us. You must make no noise. If you are not ready to obey, I swear, by the heaven above us, I will fire this pistol and kill you on the spot! Be quick!—your choice?"

"Caramba! I will go," answered Cortez, changing his manner, abruptly, to one of submission.

For, with the quickness of a lightning flash, he reasoned as follows:

"This negro—whom I took to be Dwyer Allison—is a Satan! I see murder in his eye! He will certainly keep his word if I hesitate! He will pull that trigger, and my brains will be spilled! Malediction! I must not die yet—I must live!—for vengeance, and to grind Helene Cerey, the tigress, under my heel! I must not die till I have had my revenge!—vengeance on Helene Cerey, and on these villains—all—Caramba! If I am cautious, I may yet escape this giant of a negro, this 'curst Shadow,' this woman, whom I recognize as the servant of Carline Mandoro fifteen years ago! I will be wary. I will go with them. Mayhap I may get loose shortly; and if I do—ho! let them look out!"

"Will you swear to go quietly?" asked Gael, speaking rapidly. "For, remember, I am in earnest: you shall die the moment you falter, hesitate, or resist!"

"I will go," replied Cortez, dolefully.

"Come, then. Do not forget: your life hangs on a thread. If you so much as look to the right, or to the left, or other than directly in front, you die in your tracks."

"I tell you I will go—and I swear to submit quietly."

The Spaniard was permitted to regain his feet.

Gael grasped him by the collar, with a hold of iron, and thrust the pistol-barrel into his ear.

"The device!" thought Cortez. "If he trips or stumbles, or has a nervous contraction of the finger, I am a dead man. Curse this fix!"

Zetta led the way from the cellar. The Shadow followed stealthily in their rear.

Cortez behaved docilely enough—walked straight and steady; but, all the while, his eyes were snapping, his teeth were grinding, a fire of murderous hate and anger was seething in his passionate breast, as he inwardly cursed the trio who so cleverly had gotten him into their power; and he vowed, a score of times, to annihilate these tormenting captors, should opportunity ever offer.

They proceeded to the large room on the second floor, where we first introduced the beautiful girl, Zuelo, to the reader.

Here they paused.

Zetta—holding the great lamp so that its rays fell across the frowning, scowling, contorted face of their prisoner—looked upon him in triumph.

The Shadow was near; the flashing, scintillating eyes fastened like orbs of a deadly charm on the Spaniard.

"Now, Cortez Mendoza," said Gael, in that deep voice which made his utterance so impressive, "you say you did not kill Carline Mandoro—"

"Caramba! no!" interrupted Cortez, who stood with his back toward the speaker, the iron grip still at his collar, the pistol still in his ear.

A man of less nerve than Cortez Mendoza must have quailed in terror under so startling a predicament; for, had there occurred the least thing to disturb the trigger of the pistol, the days of the man it menaced would end with the fatal discharge.

"And we grant that you are right," continued the negro. "We know that you did not kill Carline Mandoro—"

"Ha! you know it?"

"You stabbed her—but you did not murder her as you thought and intended. She lived. But you did kill Wart Gomez, and for that we shall deal with you as your crime deserves. We are the avengers of Wart Gomez!"

"You remember me?" inquired Zetta, sternly.

"You were the servant of Carline Mandoro—yes. You think I murdered Wart Gomez; you think I stabbed Carline Mandoro; you seek vengeance on me, because I wronged, or tried to wrong, or killed, or tried to kill your master and mistress. But you are mistaken. I am an innocent man! Caramba!"

"What proof have you of it?" demanded Gael.

"The dying confession of Sanzo Romero!"

"Who was Sanzo Romero?"

"He was one of a gang of thieves who were governed by that girl-queen, called by them 'Rosella, the Pride.' Sanzo Romero killed Wart Gomez—not I!"

"Where is this confession?"

"It is here!" He drew a folded manuscript from his pocket, and cast it upon the floor, at the feet of Zetta.

The woman picked it up.

"Read it," he added, doggedly, "and you will see that I did not kill Wart Gomez, and also, that it was not I who stabbed Carline Mandoro. I am an innocent, but unlucky dog! Caramba!"

"We will read it, but not

ped by her struggles, and her cry rang shrilly out:

"Louis! oh, Louis, help!"

It was over in an instant like a flash. The glass, held unconsciously in his tense grasp, its contents unspilled, was flung fairly in her cap's face; Louis struck him one blow in which all his strength was concentrated, and tore the girl's form from his arms.

"Isola! Great God! you here!"

Simultaneously with the shots and the command to surrender, the door of the distant room where Florien lay upon a couch scarcely recovered from her swoon, was tried, and yielding, opened. Mrs. Redesdale glanced around, the startled cry which rose to her lips freezing there, her face turned gray as ashes.

She was baffled in the very moment of her success. There, already in the room, were the three men—her husband, the man whose name she falsely wore, and Florien's lover.

Aubrey's voice at her side, Aubrey's kisses upon her pallid cheek, Aubrey's tears bedewing her bright hair, were her awakening from the unconsciousness which had mercifully fallen upon her. Before the impetuous lover even the long-absent father fell back, but after the first shock of surprise, Mrs. Redesdale's countenance—dark with malignity, gleaming with the triumph of malice—turned toward them.

"That is my son's wife, sir. If you can not respect her weakness, her husband will doubtless have satisfaction for the insult."

"Oh, my God!" moaned Florien, shrinking away. "It is true, Aubrey. They forced me to it—they forced me to marry him, but I never consented. Can it be a marriage when I was not willing?"

Aubrey sprang up to turn fiercely upon the scornfully-smiling woman beyond.

"How dared you—how dared you! Oh, but you shall bitterly rue all this!"

Then, while his passionate face was turned toward her, the door was flung back and Louis stood there with Isola's form supported in his arms. He was white as the colorless face lying against his breast, and his voice was a hoarse whisper.

"Mother, is this your work? May Heaven curse you as you have ruined us."

She shrunk a little before the bitter agony of face and voice, but with a glance at Alec Kenyon, who was pressing forward, and a hand put out to restrain him, she turned her hard, unflinching gaze to meet that of her son.

"Another grave opened—the sea gives back its dead. My work here is ended, I am afraid. My dear son, she is his daughter, Alec Kenyon's daughter by his first wife, as he will tell you—not mine. Since she has the honor of being your lawful wife, the little ceremony of tonight can serve as nothing more than a pleasant remembrance, an amusing recollection, the farce following the little drama which has ended in a preposterously old-fashioned way."

In the confusion, the great excitement, the explanations following, the baffled schemer slipped away. Colonel Marquestone was not among the prisoners taken. He, with a few others, made his way through the tunnel connecting with the cave, and escaped in the smugglers' boat. It was supposed that she was with them. Wickedness is sure to bring its own reward; so, though, obscurity clouds the fate of these two, we may know that it never could be a pleasant or a bright one.

Aunt Deb rejoiced in the task of nursing Florien back to perfect health. Miss De herself visible through the open door, wearing a softer visage than of old, and speaking more gently, but in other ways unchanged. Mr. Redesdale by the table, lost in the contents of the papers just brought in. Beside the open window, Florien and Aubrey talking together.

"So soon, Aubrey," she answered something of his. "We are both so young; we can wait a long time yet."

"So soon, indeed; and all the chances of losing you, from midnight elopements to bold abductions in open day! We are young, and I am glad that we are. It will give us the more time to live our lives out together. Is it yes, Florien?"

She hesitated, and the paper which had shaded her father's face went down.

"Send the presumptuous young puppy about his business, Florien. After doing without my daughter for eighteen years past, I shall surely claim her for the eighteen to come."

She threw a startled glance toward him, and then turned back to drop her hand into that of her lover.

"You'll have to take Aubrey, too, papa. Eighteen years, indeed! It's yes, Aubrey."

But, after all, it was early winter before the wedding came to pass, not midsummer as he had named. Never a fairer bride wore the orange wreath! never a happier heart beat under fabulously priceless satins and laces! never a prouder, tenderer husband than Aubrey proved himself!

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Lynne were at the wedding. And even then, loving his wife as he really did, acknowledging the great change for the better she had accomplished in him, Walter could not quite repress a sigh at the remembrance of what "might have been." For Gerry's undisturbed happiness let us hope she did not suspect it.

Eccentric Walter Lynne, the elder, was there too, and he found an opportunity to press a packet into Gerry's hand, as he said:

"Wedding gift, Gerry; never gave you one. Just remembered—glad I did. You look uncommonly like your grandmother, to-day, my dear."

The little packet was a deed of gift of his own handsomely-furnished house. They took up their abode there, as he intimated his desire, and now a Walter of the third generation makes the old house ring again with his merry shouts, and Mr. Lynne, senior, no longer bewails the disadvantage of being rich without worthy heirs.

"What did I do?"

"National Peculiarities."—Heinrich Heine, the German wit and poet, gave the following account of the different manner in which Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans regard liberty: The Englishman loves liberty like his lawful wife, the Frenchman loves her like his mistress, the German loves her like his old grandmother. And yet, after all, no one can tell how things may turn out. The grumpy Englishman, in an ill temper with his wife, is capable of some day putting a rope round her neck, and taking her to be sold at Smithfield. The inconstant Frenchman may become unfaithful to his adored mistress, and be seen flitting about the Palais Royal after another. But the German will never quite abandon his old grandmother; he will keep her for a nook by the chimney-corner.

TO A MUMMY IN A MUSEUM.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

For thirty centuries, sweet maid,
Thou hast in an old tomb been lying;
A period long, it seems to me,
For one to slumber thus in lying.
And whether thou wert brown or fair
I might inquire till distraction;
But this I know that time has fled
Has not improved thy old complexion.

I'd like to know what name you bore;
Were you a princess of great splendor?
Or did you pace the streets of Thebes
As a sweet-spoken pensive vendor?
Didst thou in courtly halls recline,
Which brightly shone with diamonds flashing?
Or didst thou toil at scrubbing floors,
Or do the cooking and the washing?

I wonder if these silent ears
Were warmed at some proud young prince's praises,
Or hearkened to the stable boy
Who told his love while washing chaises?
Say, didst thou tread thetic boards,
Or in the temple swing the censor?
Didst thou know Pharaoh? (I myself
Know him some dollars' worth; please answer!)

If they should put thee, maid, to soak,
And bring thee back by necromancy,
So thou couldst open those shut eyes,
Thou wouldst be much surprised, I fancy,
To see the changes Time has made
In modern feminine apparel,
With lace and ribbons by the mile,
And frills and flounces by the barrel.

Thy feet never wore the bon ton shoe,
With heels set up a couple of inches;
Thy shoes were not so small as these
Of later times, by several pinches.
Thou wouldst puzzle those who know
The mystery of the modern fashion,
Because thou couldst not comprehend,
And it would put thee in a passion.

The pride of long descent is thine;
Thy ancestors they know Gambyes,
And thou hast worshipped at the shrine
Of later times, by several pinches.

Yet, thou hast seen the world's great men,
Of late eyes in a world that's new,
And like a duncie I've come and gone
And wrote a poem dry as you are.

Almost Guilty.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"ERIE!"

It was simply his Christian name she pronounced, but she threw into that word such bitter reproach, such anguished questioning, that he turned his face—so darkly handsome, so proud—half-inquiringly toward her, without, however, a word.

"You hear me then," she went on; "perhaps I should congratulate myself that Claudia Entressel has not so completely infatuated you as to render you deaf to your wife's voice. Is it not shameful, I say, that a woman must come to her husband and beg for his love? And he giving that love to another—a young girl—his bright eyes could scarce find his way!"

As Editha went on, there was more of actual agony in her trembling voice, and less of contemptuous reproach; and her eyes, blue as a June sky, grew dewy and lustrous with their gathered tears.

It seemed very strange that Erie Gordon did not love her—so beautiful, so womanly, so gently fair, and above all, because she was his very own. But it was the heart-breaking truth Editha had told—bright eyes had lured him, a sweet voice had charmed him—Claudia Entressel, with her strangely fascinating way had won Erie Gordon's allegiance from Editha.

Months had passed since Claudia came to the Gordon family to be little Erie's instructress; and yet, because her own soul was pure, Editha Gordon had never suspected that the beautiful, graceful woman to whom she had entrusted her little daughter, was scheming and planning. She had completely gained the ascendancy over little Erie, who clung to her, and followed her all the time.

And then she had captivated Erie—he who was not worthy to be the father of a child of Editha's; he who had won her love, and kept it, the while he was not worthy to touch the white dresses she always wore. But she worshipped him—to her he was perfection; of him she would believe no guilt, until all at once, like a thunder-clap from a cloudless sky, the curtain was withdrawn, and her horrified eyes saw what broke her heart.

It had come to a crisis unexpectedly, suddenly, and very naturally, careful though the two—this false and Claudia and her conscienceless lover—had been, they grew used to Editha's utter un suspicion, and growing used, grew indifferent.

One morning, after Mrs. Gordon had kissed her husband as he started to his business, she gave him a pink moss-bud—a dainty half-blown one it was that she had picked from her favorite rose-bush—one that bloomed but seldom; that she prized greatly, and her husband knew it, for its rarity as well as beauty and fragrance.

Five minutes later, passing an open door, it was from within that she saw Claudia Entressel bending over that rose-bud, caressing and kissing it passionately.

Editha went straight in, pale and wondering. "Please, where did you get that, Miss Entressel?"

Claudia reddened, then paled, then drew haughtily up.

"I do not know that I am under any obligation to answer whatever questions you see fit to put, Mrs. Gordon."

Then tiny Erie's voice chimed in.

"Silence, Erie!" and Miss Entressel turned like a whirlwind to the little one.

"I see," faintly said Mrs. Gordon, and Claudia saw her reach out her hands for support against the desk. "Erie, close your books, dear, and come with me. Miss Entressel, you will find a cheque for the quarter's salary in the parlor as you pass. The next train leaves for your home at noon."

It was very coldly said, perhaps carelessly; but, oh, the horror, the agony under the mask! All that morning she remained in her room, until nearly eleven; then, when she had filled out the cheque, went down into the parlor to await Miss Entressel's departure.

Sitting there in the cool darkness, it seemed as if her very being rose up in jealous, angry rebellion; gradually there dawned upon her the utter enormity of her permitting such a woman as Claudia Entressel to pass through her portals unpunished for the terrible havoc she had wrought within the threshold.

She would punish her, too; and Editha felt her pulse bounding madly in tune with her overladen heart—she would punish her to the death.

That was the thought, full-born; Editha Gordon, the gentle, the loving and trusting, could deliberately sit and plan, ah! such plots, that in after days she strove often to forget.

Then, very quietly, and with supernatural calmness, she went back to her own room, and locked the door.

Without a quiver, or a tremble of the dainty fingers, she rung for refreshments to be brought immediately; and when they came—a tempting little basket of cake, a glass of claret, and sliced pineapple—she deftly slipped them with sugary melting powder that, after a moment or two, melted and disappeared.

Then she rung for Miss Entressel.

"Since you will take the train at lunch time,

perhaps this will serve you until you reach your destination. Pray, help yourself."

A trifle paler than usual, she was, perhaps, and her eyes were a set, stately glitter; otherwise Editha was not moved, even when Claudia Entressel drank the tiny glass of wine, and haughtily ate the cake and fruit, almost as if accepting a great favor.

Then, with a smile on her red lips that Editha never forgot, Claudia bowed herself away.

How awfully still the house was after that; Editha grew strangely nervous, and started at the slightest sound. She feared to think even of what had happened, what would happen; she dreaded to meet her own eye in the mirror, lest something should be peering over her shoulder, with that mockingly radiant smile Claudia Entressel had worn.

Rapidly the awful horror of what she had done overwhelmed her; as if from a horrid trance she awoke to actual reason, and found her hands encircled with blood.

It was terrible, that hour of silent communion in her bedchamber; there was no respite from the grinning ghoul that her fevered imagination peopled the room with; there was nothing but woe, woe unutterable.

After an hour—it seemed eternity—Editha started for her usual walk in the park; going through the upper hall, she saw the door of her husband's dressing-room ajar, and a light traveling-sachet, partly packed, lying on a chair.

In that one moment Editha understood it all; why Claudia had so unreluctantly left Gordon Lodge, why she had gone with that scornful smile on her false lips—even then, Editha realized, with a shivering horror, those ruby red lips might never part in smile or speech again.

Without a premonitory tap she went in, straight up to her husband, pale, trembling, and yet burning with a terrible feverishness, unrest.

She addressed him, and as yet he had made her no answer, beyond a sneering laugh in his handsome eyes.

"Well," he said, after a time, "do you want me to deny all you have said?"

"What good would that do? You are going to her now," then, with a sudden savage fierceness in her words, "that is, if she is not—"

Perhaps her sudden pause, or it may be, by the ominous light that never before had shone in her eyes, but Erie caught her by the arm—that dainty, delicate arm, where he left cruel blue marks.

"If she is not—what? Answer me, Editha! Have you dared?"

He never finished the sentence on his tongue's end; for she threw up her hands as if to ward off the utterance of a suspicion her own heart did not dare frame even in thought; then, with her face stony with woe, she clutched blindly for support on the chair, and slid, fainting, to the carpet.

He rung for a woman to attend Mrs. Gordon; and then hastily ordered the carriage for the depot.

It was a fortnight after that when Editha Gordon awoke to perfect consciousness, to find little Erie roused in deepest mourning, and the countenance of her nurse the embodiment of polite commiseration.

"What does it mean?" she whispered, faintly. "Miss Erie's mourning, ma'am! I fear you can not bear it—but the truth can be hidden no longer."

Editha struggled up to her elbow.

"Yes—what have you to tell? Where is Miss Entressel? Erie—where is—pa—"

"Do not talk, dear Mrs. Gordon, and I will tell you all. It was a terrible accident they had on the Erie—and Mr. Gordon was killed—"

A little moan from Editha as she sunk among the pillows, with quivering lips.

"Yes—tell me all."

"That is all, Mrs. Gordon, that can affect you personally. Miss Entressel was on the same train, and she was burned frightfully—she died since."

Then Editha, with wide eyes, started up.

"She died? What was the matter?"

"Oh! her wounds, my dear, of course. She inhaled the flame, you see. But poor Mr. Gordon did not suffer, they say, at all."

She lay back again on her pillow, to try to think it all over.

Dead—both of them dead!

Her husband, whom she had so loved, so worshipped; his proud head laid low, his perfect beauty hid away forever.

Oh! the desolation, the desolation!

And that other—who had worked all this sad, pitiful havoc—well, Editha remembered that, though she had striven to take from an All-High Power the vengeance he reserved, she had been spared the awful guilt of murder.

But how was it? was she guiltless in intent, if not in result? She could not understand why her awful design failed; she only knew she was saved; that her hands were clean again.

Later, when she was strong enough to go to her room, her first steps were to her dressing-bureau, where the little box of white powder had lain throughout all the tragedy that had been enacting.

Not without trembling, Editha essayed to pour it upon the open fire; but her nurse prevented it.

"Oh, Mrs. Gordon! please do not throw away that cream of tartar! I make use of it every day."

"Cream of tartar?" repeated Editha, vaguely. "I dreamed it was—was arsenic," she added, faintly.

"What an idea! when it's been there, in my drawer, too, these six months, so old Chloe told me. Arsenic, indeed! who on earth wants arsenic in their bedroom?"

She remembered it all now; how, a year or so ago, there had been arsenic there, that she used, foolishly, occasionally. Then, deciding to discontinue it, had thrown it away; and, when Chloe left a box of cream of tartar on her toilet-stand one day, she had thrust it in the drawer, intending it should be taken down.

In those days, when she marshaled in memory all those dark hours, she wondered how she ever contemplated such awfulness; wondered why she paid such utter disregard to the appearances of things; but, most of all, wondered and gave prayerful thanks that she was not altogether guilty, if not quite guiltless.

A Child's Work.

BY EBEN E. HENFORD.

"Go away! We won't play with you; you're a drunkard's child. Your father gets drunk most every day, my father says."

The speaker was a girl of perhaps twelve years of age. The one addressed was a girl of about the same age.

A group of children had gathered by the roadside to play. A small house stood near by. From this house the child addressed so rudely had seen them at their sport, and had joined them, to be repulsed by the words with which I have begun my story.

Her eyes filled with tears, and her cheeks flushed up with shame and wounded pride.

"I know my father drinks, but I ain't to blame for that," she said, bitterly.

"Well, we won't play with you, anyway," said the first speaker.

"No! no!" cried the other children, in chorus.

"There! you heard that, didn't you?" cried the girl, to the child of a drinking father. "I hope you're satisfied now. Go along with you; we want to play, and we won't be bothered with you, so now. I'd be ashamed if I were you. You're a drunkard's daughter! Shame! Shame!"

She pointed her finger in derision and scorn at the poor girl, and parrot-like, or rather, like children, the others followed her example, and cried "Shame!" "Shame!" rung in the ears of the disgraced child.

She covered her face with her hands, and turned and ran away from them, never stopping until she reached her mother's side.

Then she sunk down sobbing as if her heart would break.

"What is the matter with my little girl?" Mrs. Deane asked, tenderly.

She was a pale, sad-faced woman, with sorrow-laden eyes. A woman who, without being old in years, was old in sad experiences of life.

"I went out to play with the girls, and they told me I was a drunkard's daughter, and wouldn't play with me," sobbed Mary, hiding her face in her mother's lap.

"Poor child!"

Mrs. Deane sighed heavily, but she did not weep.

She had found out, by bitter experience, that tears were of but little avail.

She stroked Mary's hair, and tried to soothe her by kind words. But the wound she had received was a deep one.

"Oh, mother, do you suppose father'll ever give up drinking?" she asked, after a little silence.

"I don't know," Mrs. Deane answered. "I hope so. I have prayed for such a blessing more times than I can comprehend. If God heard, he has not answered my prayer yet. He may in his own good time. I can only pray, and hope, and leave the rest to him."

"I can't go to school week-days, nor to school Sundays," said Mary, sighing as to child of her age ought to sigh. "And the children won't play with me, 'cause father drinks. And you can't go to meeting, 'cause you ain't clothes to wear. It's too bad, mother, isn't it?"

"It is a sorrowful way of living," her mother answered, kissing her. "I do not care so much for myself, but for you. I hate to see the years which should be the brightest ones in your life, darkened and made sorrowful. Oh, if he only would leave off that awful habit!"

The words held the pathos and sublimity of a prayer.

"What makes Mr. Strong sell liquor, I wonder?" questioned Mary.

"I don't know," her mother answered. "To make money, I suppose. I think a man who can make money by selling that to his fellow-man which will ruin his body and soul, must have a heart as hard as any stone."

"I wonder if anybody ever asked him to give up such wicked business?" Mary asked.

"Maybe he'd quit it if he only knew what misery he was committing. Do you suppose he would?"

"I'm afraid not," answered Mrs. Deane.

Mary sat and thought for a long time after her mother left her.

Suddenly she seemed to make up her mind as to the course she should pursue, and she got up and put on her bonnet, and started down the road, without saying any thing to her mother.

Poor Mary!

Her home had not always been the unhappy one it was then. She could remember the time when her father used to come home from his day's work, sober as any man. Then her mother would meet him at the gate with kisses, and he would take up his child and carry her to the house, and they were all so happy, so happy!

But now!

She shuddered when she thought of it.

Now she had hardly clothes enough to keep her warm; not enough to enable her to go to school, and for the same reason her mother could not go to church. Now her father often came home the worse for liquor, she could not bear to kiss him with that sickening scent of whiskey on his breath. All his earnings, for a week sometimes, would be spent at the saloon in the village.

There was but one saloon in the place, but that was enough to circulate a deal of misery and heart-ache among the neighborhood.

When Mary got out of sight of home, she turned off from the road, and knelt down among some bushes and prayed. It was a simple little prayer, but it had something very touching in it for all that.

"Dear Jesus," she said, "please help me. I'm going to try to save my father from being a drunkard, and I can't do it alone. I don't want to be called a drunkard's child, and be laughed at any more. I do want to go to school, and mother wants to go to meeting, and we can't if father keeps on drinking so. Please, dear Jesus, help me, and make Mr. Strong stop selling liquor. Amen."

Then she got up, and went on again.

She reached the village.

The first person she met was a merchant with whom they had often had dealings. Occasionally they got things at his store on credit.

"I've remembered that there was something due him yet."

"Are you going to the store?" he asked.

"No, sir," she answered.

"All right, then," he said. "I didn't know but you was down after something. I thought I'd tell you that I couldn't let your folks have any thing more until they pay for what they have had. Your father drinks up enough every day to pay me what he owes me."

Mary went on down the street until she came to a place where there was a flaming sign hung out, on which was painted in gilt letters:

"SALOON!"

Here she stopped, while her heart beat like a scared bird's.

This, then, was what some one who had a strong sense of the fitness of things had called "Strong's Hell." Here was where death and ruin to soul and body was sold over the bar at five and ten cents a glass.

Mary went in.

A man was standing behind the bar. A man with a not unhandsome face, but one which lacked culture and refinement.

"Are you Mr. Strong?" asked Mary, timidly.

"Yes that's my name," he answered, pleasantly. "What do you want of me?"

"You don't look like such a bad man as you ought to, to sell liquor," she said, looking into his face.

"Why, had a liquor-dealer ought, to look like a bad man?" he asked.

"Yes, I think so," she said. "Only bad men sell liquor, and you don't look a very bad man. I ain't much afraid of you, and I thought I should be, Oh, Mr. Strong!" clasping her hands pleadingly, and lifting a face full of beseeching to his.

"I came down here to-day to ask you to give up selling liquor. You don't know what awful work you're doing. I guess you never thought of it. Did you? I can't

go to school, because I can't have clothes good enough to wear, and I do so want to learn as other children do. I could, if you wouldn't sell my father liquor; and mother could go to meeting every Sunday. She used to, before there was a saloon in the place, but now she doesn't. And the children won't play with me. They call me a drunkard's child, and shame me. And we're real unhappy at home, mother and me. And father don't seem like the same man he used to be, since he's got to drinking. And we spend most all of his money here. And we haven't the only ones who suffer so. It's so all through the neighborhood, mother says. Ever so many men drink, who didn't, before you came here. I thought I'd come down here and ask you to stop selling liquor. Maybe you never thought how much sorrow you was causing. Didn't any one ever tell you? Oh, I cry myself to sleep, lots of times, just because father drinks. I don't want to be a drunkard's child! It's the worst thing in the